

# A Year in Manitoba

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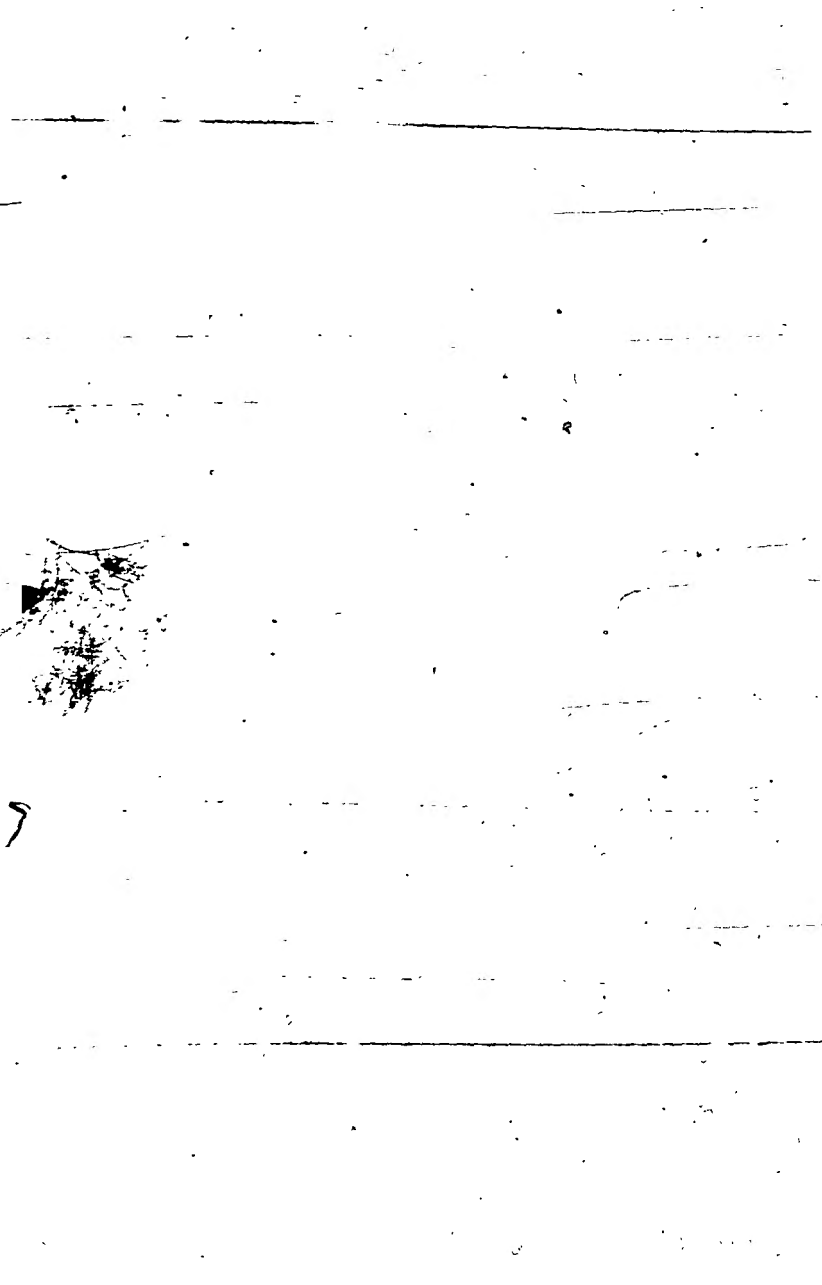


*Manitoba*

*1880-1881*

W. & R. CHAMBERS.  
LONDON & EDINBURGH

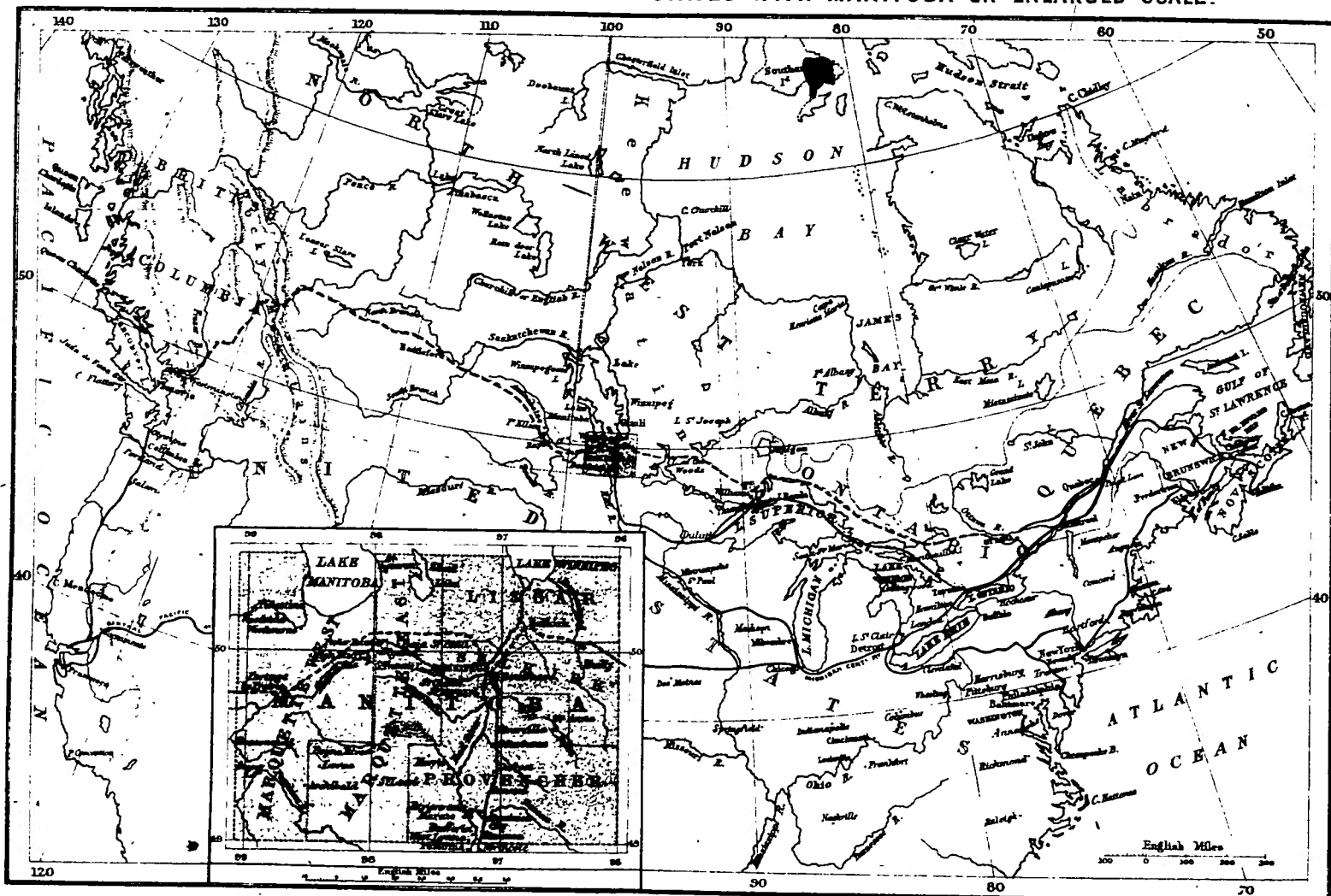
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A

# YEAR IN MANITOBA

# MAP OF CANADA AND PART OF UNITED STATES WITH MANITOBA ON ENLARGED SCALE.



Canadian Pacific Railway-----

W & A.F. Johnson Edinburgh & London

Authors Route

A  
YEAR IN MANITOBA

BEING

THE EXPERIENCE OF A RETIRED OFFICER  
IN SETTLING HIS SONS

*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS, OBSERVATIONS ON THE COUNTRY,  
AND SUGGESTIONS FOR SETTLERS GENERALLY*



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W. & R. CHAMBERS  
LONDON AND EDINBURGH  
1882

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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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So many publications have appeared, in one form or another, treating of Manitoba, and the North-west Provinces of British America, that it might almost be thought the subject was exhausted. The fact is, however, they have generally emanated from scientists, professors, delegates, or the many who have more or less interest in extolling the country, and are on that account to be taken with caution. Having fully realised this myself, it has occurred to me that the actual experience in the Province of one whose age, antecedents, and associations may give him some authority to offer it, may prove not only interesting, but really valuable to the numerous classes at home who are thinking of settling either themselves or members of their families here.

Moreover, the question of a suitable settlement for the sons of naval and military officers, clergymen, professional men, &c., has long been an anxious one; the system of competitive examinations having practically excluded all but the talented and studious from the prizes in the civil and military services, and professional life generally.

Although the English have been termed 'a nation of shopkeepers,' trade seldom commends itself to the classes above referred to, and Colonial Life seems the only 'refuge for the destitute' that in most cases offers itself.

Considerable acquaintance with some of our colonies had long convinced me that, without some previous training, young men are really no more fitted for this than for other professions. As a rule, colonial life means the practice of agriculture; and

agriculture is a trade, profession, or science, requiring for its pursuit some previous experience or initiation.

As an ex-military officer, with three or four sons to settle, the problem, how best to do this, had long been before me as a practical question; and, being fond of a country life myself, I determined to take a small farm in a good agricultural county, and there have my boys thoroughly schooled in every detail of husbandry, so as to be fitted for the work of emigrant farmers when the time arrived for them to settle in one or other of our colonies.

There can be no question that Manitoba, and the North-west Territory of British North America, have within the past two or three years attracted considerable attention as a most promising country for settlers. Offers of free grants of land—glowing accounts of the great fertility of the soil, the salubrity of the climate, and the admirable character of the government—have been sown, in books and pamphlets, broadcast over the United Kingdom, determining many hesitating emigrants to decide in its favour. Seeing an advertisement in the *Times* newspaper in the spring of 1880 of a 'Farm and Cottage' to be let in the neighbourhood of the capital of Manitoba (Winnipeg), I put myself in communication with the advertiser, and in the end decided to take it as a base for future operations; thereafter, along with my wife and daughter, accompanying my three sons to the remote west, in order to see the boys fairly started, and then return home.

With these preliminary observations I shall now proceed to lay before my readers the result of our first year's experiences.

A RETIRED OFFICER.

MANITOBA, 1881.





## ADDENDUM BY THE PUBLISHERS.

WE have only to add that we have much pleasure in launching this little work upon Manitoba—a province which offers considerable attractions to those who by perseverance and industry are determined to succeed. The narrative treats of farming operations begun and carried on between the summer of 1880 and that of 1881; and by aid of a Supplement—to which the attention of the intending emigrant is particularly directed—the reader has a statement of farming operations down to the autumn of 1881.

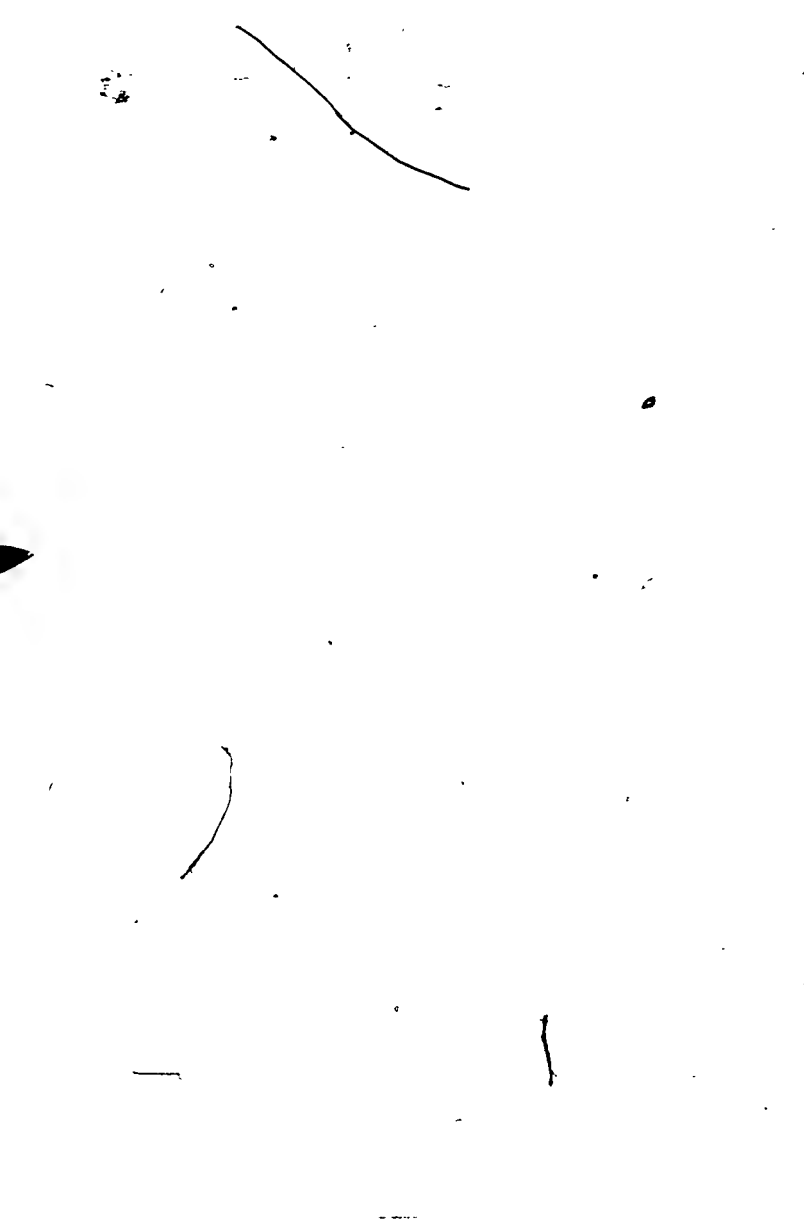
Intending emigrants will find the Practical Hints, which follow the Supplement, of service to them, not only as a guide to routes to be followed, but as directing attention to various matters connected with passage-money, colonial disbursement, &c.

We have only further to express a sincere wish that this little work may achieve a useful end, and be the means of converting the unprosperous but willing home-worker into a prosperous and contented colonist, to whom we offer a cheery God-speed.

W. & R. C.

EDINBURGH, *January* 1882.







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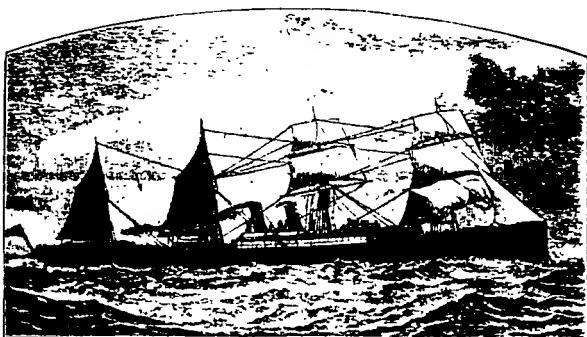
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# A YEAR IN MANITOBA.

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## CHAPTER I.

The 'Allan Line'—H.R.H. Prince Leopold and suite—The *Sardinian*—Moville—Sunday on board—The Commander as a lay preacher—An incident below—Icebergs—Fields of ice—Last evening on board—The St Lawrence—Arrival on board of the Governor-general and Princess Louise—Departure of royal and vice-regal party—Point Lévi—Queen's birthday—The ship and her officers.

**T**HE steamers of the 'Allan Line,' though not the only ones, are certainly the best between Liverpool and the Dominion of Canada. By one of these—the *Circassian*—berths were engaged for our party for 6th May 1880; but, being unable to start so early, we were transferred to the *Sardinian*—one of the finest ships of the Line—for the 13th, and had the honour of having H.R.H. Prince Leopold and suite, as fellow-passengers.

Being in Liverpool on the day of the *Circassian's* departure, I took care to be on board and see her off; thus acquainting myself with all details beforehand; and being an experienced *voyageur*, managed to have all my party on board our ship and settled in their cabins, an hour before the body of passengers embarked, thus avoiding the bustle, confusion, and not unfrequent loss of luggage, so inevitable on such occasions.

All passengers were embarked by five P.M., and about seven—during the dinner hour—His Royal Highness and suite



~~arrived on board in a very quiet and incognito manner, and immediately afterwards we were under weigh, down the Mersey.~~

The *Sardinian* is a fine specimen of our mercantile marine—of 4000 tons burden, and her engines of 1000 horse-power, fitted with every modern appliance for the safe navigation of such immense ships through the stormy and ice-beset regions of the North Atlantic. She is commanded by Captain Dutton, a good example of a merchant seaman—not only a bold and skilful navigator, who has made some five hundred voyages to and fro, but, as he subsequently proved himself, a man possessed of qualifications of a still higher order. There is a considerable contrast between the class of passengers going westward, and the class which experience had made me acquainted with on the eastern route—at least to India. Our party was a mixed one: tourists on fishing and shooting expeditions; merchants on business aims intent; a few ladies; not many settlers; Canadians returning to their own country; and last, and most interesting of the whole, H.R.H. Prince Leopold and his suite; and Lord Elphinstone, who was going out to visit a large tract of land which he has acquired in the North-west Territory.

The weather was very fine and warm on Friday the 14th, and we had a good view of the rugged coast of the north of Ireland until we reached Lough Foyle, and came to anchor about four P.M., at Moville—a not very interesting-looking village and coast-guard station—to receive the mails, and embark the Irish passengers, of whom a few joined us here. During the stay of an hour, His Royal Highness and suite went ashore with the coast-guard officer, and some few passengers subsequently went also, but there was little to repay their curiosity. At five P.M., the mails being shipped, and 'all aboard,' we made our final start, and were fairly off on our voyage for the Dominion of Canada.

The spring in England was late, and the weather in May cold and ungenial; but at sea, on Saturday, 15th, to our

~~surprise, it was quite~~ summerlike and enjoyable on deck. There was a trifling swell, and, the wind being aft, a little motion; but these long and massive ships feel little of a sea compared with smaller craft. The greatest inconvenience was from the thumping of the screw propelling so huge a ship through the water, which makes the stern, or best end of the saloon, well nigh unendurable to stay in. Our run at noon was 260 miles from Moville. Sunday, 16th, was fine, but perceptibly colder. At eleven A.M. service was held in the saloon for all who chose to attend. But, though we had about seven hundred steerage, and forty intermediate passengers, the attendance was not very large. His Royal Highness and suite, however, set a good example by their presence, and the Rev. Mr M—, a beneficed clergyman of the Church of England—going out on a visit to a relative in Canada—conducted the service. In the evening, the commander also held a service in the saloon, which was very numerously attended, and which he conducted wholly himself—a duty he seemed fully equal to. The sermon, which he preached extempore, was one of unusual power and earnestness, showing that Captain Dutton was well qualified for the office he undertook; and in which his labours can scarcely fail to be useful.

The run of the ship to noon had been 335 miles—an average of upwards of thirteen knots per hour, wholly by steam-power.

Monday, 17th, the run was 317 miles to noon; the forenoon being wet, with head wind, and generally unpleasant on deck. At this time an incident occurred which is worthy to be chronicled. Among the steerage passengers was a man bearing the well-known name of Spurgeon. Still further to celebrate it, his wife this day gave birth to a son, creating no small sensation between decks. Nor was this all. The presence of Prince Leopold on board could not be allowed to pass unheeded, and His Royal Highness was accordingly requisitioned to permit his name to be given to the bantling—a demand not only graciously acquiesced in, but generously

supplemented by a liberal donation—the new passenger thus quaintly figuring as Leopold George Spurgeon!

Tuesday, 18th. Run 296 miles. A little liveliness was now given to the evenings by some of the ladies singing and playing at the piano, in which they were very ably assisted by the Hon. A. Yorke of His Royal Highness's suite—an amateur performer of considerable merit, whether as a vocalist or comic dramatist, in which latter capacity he discovered no inconsiderable ability—causing much entertainment to the company.

On Wednesday, 19th, we began to sight icebergs—some of serious dimensions; and the temperature became exceedingly keen and frosty under their influence. They suggest a fearful source of ever-present danger in these northern seas, as was lately only too practically illustrated in the instance of that fine ship, the *Arizona*, which, on a clear night, escaped almost miraculously from utter destruction by running full tilt against one of these bergs.

We ran 333 miles to mid-day on Thursday, 20th; the weather on deck being far from agreeable, by reason of fog, rain, and cold; the first retarding our progress seriously, and demanding constant use of the fog-horn.

On Friday we had run 230 miles, or 2072 miles from Merville. In the afternoon, about three P.M., being on the banks of Newfoundland, we began to enter vast fields of ice, sighting at same time several vessels hard and fast prisoners therein. Happily it was very rotten; and although offering considerable resistance, was unable to oppose the onward progress of our ship, which slowly but surely carved its way through the dense masses having a thickness of over six feet. We were fortunate enough to run out of it before dark, passing Cape Anguille during the night, and entering the Gulf of St Lawrence.

The morning of Saturday, 22d, our ninth day on board, brought us to the Canadian shore, or island of Anticosti; and we entered the St Lawrence River about daybreak, passing much floating ice and every indication of a late season, and of

cold still prevailing ashore—a considerable amount of snow being still unthawed.

All through the day we were passing land on either side until about ten P.M. we reached Rimouski, where the mails were landed, and some four or five passengers for Halifax, &c. We were thus rather over eight days from receiving the mails at Moville to disembarking them again at Rimouski.

This being the last evening on board, many efforts were made to induce His Royal Highness to honour the company in the saloon by singing; and, to tell the truth, he seemed nothing loath himself to comply; but those about him exercised, I think, a wise discretion in dissuading him from so doing. He, however, played several accompaniments for his deputy, Mr Yorke, who greatly amused the company by his inimitably droll facial inflections, and by his vocal powers. Another passenger also—an unmistakable native of the Emerald Isle—caused much merriment by singing what he termed ‘a little Irish song.’

Sunday, 23d May, was the end of our voyage. We were steaming all the forenoon up the St Lawrence with the royal standard at the main, and most passing ships cheered and dipped the ensign in its honour. Varied scenery—all more or less woodland—appeared on either side: I confess we were disappointed with it, but the season was unusually late, and the winter garb still reigned supreme. The falls of Montmorency, about seven miles below Quebec, were a feature in the landscape, but rather too far back to be seen to much advantage. About two P.M., we reached Point Lévi, opposite the town and citadel of Quebec; and a state barge was at once descried approaching with the royal standard flying, and bearing the Marquis and Marchioness (Princess Louise) of Lorne and suite. They at once came on board, the Princess stepping up first, and warmly embracing her brother at the gangway. Remaining about twenty minutes on board, the whole royal and vice-regal party returned to Quebec under a royal salute from the citadel.

We were so unfortunate as to arrive on a Sunday. This of itself was a sufficient inconvenience, but it was much aggravated by preceding the Queen's birthday on the morrow—an event usually celebrated with unwonted demonstrations of loyalty throughout the Dominion, and a grand review was in preparation of all the volunteers of the Province, who, as a consequence, had appropriated all the hotel room in the town. We had therefore no alternative but to go on at once to Montreal—a necessity shared by a large proportion of the ship's passengers, for whom, therefore, a special train was appointed to start at five P.M. We English are a Sunday-keeping people, and the same applies more or less to the people of the Dominion—though less of course to the Province of Quebec than to the Protestant Province of Ontario. However, everything seemed awkward. The getting out of the luggage was a most tedious and ill-arranged business. Having many packages, it occupied upwards of two hours before I could recover them all. At about four P.M., we quitted the good ship *Sardinian*, and her able commander. It is but fair to her owners to say, that although I had one or two grievances, yet it would be invidious to mention these where everything else was so satisfactory; a person must be indeed hard to please who was dissatisfied with the arrangements for passengers generally. To begin with, though a traveller having considerable experience of passenger-ships, I never met with a quieter or better conducted crew—no noise, no bad language in any part of the ship. With this the personal character of the commander had doubtless much to do; and the servants in the saloons and cabins were equally quiet, obliging, and well conducted. The table, too, was liberal and unexceptionable; and in fact, Messrs Allan Brothers, without dispute, give their passengers money's worth for their fares; and I heard the same testimony borne by passengers in the other compartments of the ship.

## CHAPTER II.

Landing on Canadian soil—Point Lévi—Custom-house—English and American railway carriages—Pullman cars—At Montreal—The *Windsor* Hotel—The town—Departure for Toronto—Riotous travellers—A disagreeable journey—Fine appearance of the country in Ontario—Arrival at Toronto.

ON Sunday then, May 23d, we landed on Canadian soil, and commenced our emigrant life. Point Lévi—for we were unable to visit the town of Quebec itself—is a poor place, and the railway station—what shall I term it?—the veriest scene of confusion I ever witnessed!

Although there were but about seventy cabin passengers, the *Sardinian* carried nearly eight hundred steerage and intermediates besides; and these had all to be passed through the custom-house, and their luggage examined—a serious inroad on the needed rest and usual leisure of officials on a Sunday.

I met, myself, with no inconvenience in this usually vexatious ordeal. I simply made a declaration that my baggage contained nothing liable to duty, and each trunk and package was at once passed without any examination. Whether I owed this entire immunity to my ex-military connection I know not; but so it was.

About nine P.M.—four hours after the appointed time—the train, to our infinite relief, moved out of that Babel-like station. American railway-cars differ vastly from English railway-carriages; and the difference is to my view much to the advantage of the latter. The system of so many passengers in one compartment, ever moving about, going in and out to other carriages, slamming the doors, &c., is prohibitive of all rest, at anyrate to those not thoroughly used to it; and railway travelling being so often for long distances on this continent, this seems a serious drawback. It is true the Pullman cars are available for those who wish to enjoy a night's repose,

for which the extra charge of a dollar (4s.) is not by any means unreasonable; but this is not at first understood by all new arrivals, so little accustomed as they are, as a rule, to night travelling, and was certainly not so by us until we had endured some very unpleasant experience. We reached Montreal, a distance of 180 miles, at six A.M.; the fares for our party of six, first class, we thought cheap as such, being about one penny per mile only. But on the whole, I consider the third class of the English Midland—by which we had journeyed to Liverpool at the same rate—superior travelling *every way*; therefore the cheapness was more apparent than real.

On arrival at Montreal we sent on our luggage by omnibus, but were only too glad ourselves, after sitting all night, to take advantage of the freshness of a summer morning—though the sun was very hot—to walk up to our hotel, the *Windsor*, a fine handsome stone-built establishment claiming to be one of the best hotels on the American continent. In point of accommodation for its visitors, this claim may perhaps be sustained; but in actual size it can hardly be so. The halls, corridors, staircases, sleeping and other apartments, are of a sumptuous character; the luncheon and dining halls—distinct rooms—being splendid specimens of architectural design and artistic decoration. The cuisine, too, was admirable. Each bedroom contains, besides the bedstead—which occupies a corner, more as an accident than as the real feature of the room—a loo table, and chairs of various kinds, sofa, &c.; and a bath-room, with hot and cold water laid on, as a separate apartment. The charges, though they come heavy on a party of six, were not at all excessive for accommodation of the class and excellence provided—four dollars (16s.) per diem, including everything but wines. We left at nine P.M. to take the mail train for Toronto.

The time we were in Montreal was limited; and moreover, being the Queen's birthday, it was a general holiday, and all shops and public buildings were closed. We saw the town, therefore, to the worst possible advantage. We were



decidedly disappointed with it. It possesses undoubtedly many fine buildings, and the situation of the hotel, on a hill, is both pretty and commanding; but its miserable railway station—unpardonably so for so large a city—and the poverty-stricken aspect of the streets leading therefrom to the heart of the town, have a very unprepossessing effect upon the visitor. What strikes a European, too, is the roughness and uncivilised appearance of the roads and footways, constructed for the most part wholly of rough boards. The frost of winter, from which everything had but recently emerged, is no doubt answerable for much of this; but it existed, and was by no means attractive. The population (140,863 in 1881) is the largest of any town or city of the Dominion, and is chiefly French (Canadian) and Roman Catholic—a fact you are soon made aware of from the number of melancholy-garbed ecclesiastics, male and female, and by the incessant tolling of bells.

At the station at night (9.30) we had a scene! I think, however long we may live, none of us will forget it. I had taken first-class tickets to Toronto for our party, including my wife and daughter. Having duly seen all the luggage checked,\* we entered a car to take our seats. But what a spectacle presented itself! The whole length of the carriage—say twenty feet—was occupied by a set of men with nothing on but under-waistcoats, and (apparently) their drawers (the weather was very hot)—lolling with their legs stretched out all over the carriages, singing, blaspheming, smoking—a very pandemonium! We tried a second car, and a third, but all seemed alike. We therefore beat a retreat, and sought the station-master. He was very obliging, and having verified the state of things and examined the tickets—finding them all ‘first-class’!—he at once ordered another carriage to be put on for our use; but by the time it arrived it became nearly filled

\* This is done by giving the traveller a brass ticket for each package—the baggage-man retaining a duplicate. With a lot of luggage this is a serious encumbrance.



by parties, if not as numerous, certainly, as our experience too painfully realised, as ill conducted as the first.

All persons appear to travel first-class in Canada. At any-rate, though they profess to have two classes, these distinctions are not generally observed, and practically 'Liberté, égalité, fraternité,' is the order of the day.

I appealed to the conductor, who is supposed to perambulate the entire train, against the singing and noise going on in our carriage, asking if it was a thing allowed. He replied to me; 'Most certainly not; directly I have checked the tickets I'll stop it.' But he never appeared again; poor man, it was a task beyond his power—it was general throughout the train. Up to nearly two A.M. we had to endure this fearful revel of half-intoxicated men, having no respect for sex or age. They yelled, sang alternate snatches of Moody and Sankey's hymns, and of ribald songs—rushed about the car from end to end like madmen, seeming especially pleased to come and stand close to my wife and daughter, who of course were greatly alarmed at their frenzy—pushing one another about, and yelling at the top of their voices! Such a scene would be absolutely impossible in the very lowest class of English carriages. Though it is to be hoped that this was a very exceptional instance of colonial manners, it certainly gave one a very poor opinion of the ways of Canadians, for the social position of these men seemed, from their attire, to be quite equal to that of our shopmen at home. They relieved us—and it was a relief indeed!—of their ill-mannerly company at a station called West Cornwall; and I don't envy that place the distinction. Relieved of these fellows, we got on fairly well till morning, when we were enabled to observe the very marked difference in the appearance of the farms and general condition of the country in Ontario, which we had entered during the night.

The country through which we now passed was of a very rich, undulating character; sufficiently wooded to indicate that the farms now surrounded with verdant fields of grass and corn

had formed till recently part of the primeval forest. A sandy loam seemed to be the general character of the soil, and the crops gave every promise of abundance. The season, however, was a late one throughout Canada, and although the weather was hot—more than pleasantly so in fact—vegetation generally was very backward, and things appeared much in the same condition as in England three weeks before. The genial season of spring ever makes all country life look to the best advantage.

We reached Toronto shortly before noon, having breakfasted on the way at about eight A.M. The distance is about 350 miles; and, as we were late in starting, we had been about 13½ hours on the journey. The heat was great at Toronto; there was considerable delay in disposing of our baggage; and as by this time the hotel omnibuses had left the station, being weary with our travel, we alighted at the nearest respectable-looking hostelry we could see.

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### CHAPTER III.

Toronto—Routes to Winnipeg—Collingwood Lake route—Departure from Toronto—Attractive country—Collingwood—A lake steamer—Scenery—Owen Sound—Sault Ste Marie—A fine canal—Lake Superior—Prince Arthur's Landing—Fort William—Unwelcome detention—Arrival at Duluth—Details of the voyage.

WE had some friends in Toronto resident near a very attractive suburb of the city—the neighbourhood of the Observatory, the University, and the Park, where the richness of the pasture, the luxuriant foliage of the chestnuts and other trees, gave the whole a most charming and home-like appearance.

Toronto is decidedly pleasing to those newly arrived from England. The streets, the shops, public buildings, villas and other suburban residences, the flowers—these above all, all the common flowers of our native land blooming in the greatest vigour and profusion—impressed us warmly. The markets were.

abundantly supplied with everything usual at home. The one drawback was the streets and roads, apparently wrecked by long-continued winter frosts; and this seems general. The pavements too are for the most part of wood; not often, though occasionally, of flags, as at home. Double lines of tram-cars ply on the principal streets. King Street appeared to be the best street, and contains many first-class English-looking shops and trade-establishments.

Among other matters engaging attention at Toronto was, the selection of a route to take us to our destination—Winnipeg—these being somewhat numerous.

Thinking that we should be more independent in taking fares from Liverpool only as far as Quebec, we had to make fresh arrangements at every place we stopped at. This was undoubtedly a great mistake, as, both in a pecuniary point of view and as a matter of convenience, I would advise all parties to take tickets, as far as practicable, for their ultimate destinations, from the steamship company at Liverpool, before starting.

The office of Barlow Cumberland, in Yonge Street, was one that attracted our notice by its announcement of 'The Collingwood Lake Superior Line; by 200 miles the shortest Lake route to the North-west. The time about the same as all rail, &c.' We entered the office, and were received with much attention and assurances of the superior excellence of the accommodation offered. Finally, every assurance being given that the journey to Duluth would not exceed four days, tickets were taken for our party to Winnipeg by this route, to start the same evening, and leave Collingwood on the following afternoon. It will presently appear how little promise and performance were in harmony with this company. The fares for our party (six), first-class rail and steamer to Duluth, and second-class rail Duluth to Winnipeg (for after our experience of 'first-class' from Montreal to Toronto, I resolved to pay no more 'first-class' rail—as being a distinction to the advantage of the railway company, without a difference of profit to the traveller—and get Pullman-car tickets for ladies at night), was £39, 8s. 6d.;

the distance about 1000 miles, of which some 600 were by water.

We left Toronto with regrets, for we could well have enjoyed a week or more spent there. It is a city that has many attractions for the visitor; but we wanted to get to our journey's end, as the season was already late, and we were, moreover, unfortunate in our selection of quarters. The *Queen's* is 'the' hotel—a large building not very far from the station.

The journey from Toronto to Collingwood—ninety-five miles—was through a very pretty farming country; the farms generally, as seen from the rail, with their luxuriantly blooming orchards of apples, reviving memories of Devonshire and cider, and presenting an engaging spectacle to the agricultural eye. We passed a few towns and manufactories, but Canada is so far obviously the country of farmers.

It was dark when we reached Collingwood at 10 P.M., and lamps being as yet an unsupplied luxury there, we had some difficulty in finding a hotel, and then not the best one. However, the accommodation was fairly good. We got some tea and supper; but it was awfully hot, though fortunately a brisk breeze from off the lake sprang up about midnight, thus insuring us a good night's rest.

Collingwood is a place of some importance, and can boast some excellent shops—shops that quite astound one by their size, and the amount and variety of their stock, looking at the place itself, which seemed to contain very few residences of any size or importance. But it is a *port*, and many folks go through or stay a while at it; besides the ever-present farmer from distances far and near, who, with his family, is always a good customer in cash, or, more frequently, 'in kind.' It contains some lumber (timber) mills, but otherwise I observed no manufactories.

Our steamer, *City of Owen Sound*, was there, looking far more like the usual toy version of Noah's ark than anything I had before seen at home or abroad called a steamship.

These boats are built in stories; the first—which might be

termed the 'ground floor'—being on the level of the quay or landing-place. The second floor, the saloon and cabin deck. The third, a sort of hurricane deck of perilous altitude, and dangerous to the last degree for all but those who work the ship, or passengers of very careful habits of locomotion. From this deck the ship is steered and commanded. The saloon was a long narrow chamber running nearly the whole length of the ship; the cabins (or 'state-rooms' as they are so unaccountably designated) all open into this saloon. To the cabins and berths I will give the fullest credit. The former are small, but perfectly clean, well lighted and aired; the latter unusually roomy, and well and very comfortably bedded. I think we all enjoyed our nights' rest on board this ship beyond any since leaving England. But there commendation must cease. The meals were at unreasonable hours. Breakfast, seven A.M.; dinner, twelve; tea, six; and *no other refreshments* from that early hour until breakfast next morning—thirteen hours! Indeed, it was *not readily* we obtained a little ice, before going to bed, to cool a glass of water! The meals, too, especially the dinner, were quite unequal to the fares paid, which exceeded by a long way per head the day-by-day charge of the outward voyage from England. No poultry, no fruit, on any occasion, and not always fish or a drop of soup. In fact, the fare was of the *plainest*—what the hotels ashore would charge a party like mine a dollar (4s.) a head a day for; whereas we were paying *upwards* of £1 a day for the four days the voyage was to occupy.

The number of our fellow-passengers was very limited at starting; but, from first to last, we picked up and dropped what Canadians would call 'quite a number.' As to the voyage, it had so many annoyances, we failed to see any enjoyment in it. The lake scenery—described as 'magnificent'—may strike those unaccustomed to the varied scenery of different parts of the world as beautiful. It did not so impress us. Any combination of land, water, and trees must be more or less picturesque; but there appeared to us to be a peculiar

monotony about the scenery—nothing but shores of wood, with but very occasional indications of man's presence, or habitation.

We stopped first at Owen Sound, at the head of Georgian Bay—a town sixty miles from Collingwood. Here arriving about six A.M., we remained two or three hours, and went ashore, going over the town, and were impressed by its busy and obviously growing character. Many of its shops were excellent. The weather, too, was lovely—warm and bright, with a fresh exhilarating breeze from off the lake. Two farmers (or dealers) going to Winnipeg here shipped a large number of horses, which were a source of much interest to our boys to the end of the voyage. Our next stoppage was during the night, at Manitoulin Island, and Little Current.

Sunday, 30th, broke upon us wet and foggy, and revealed a number of islands covered with cedar trees, and a town on the right shore, at which we made a short stoppage—called St<sup>e</sup> Marie—where were schools, churches, and a bishop's residence. Farther on, we crossed from the Canadian to the American (U.S.) shore, and entered the canal—a short, but very grand one, with three mighty locks, at the city of Sault, or Sault St<sup>e</sup> Marie, on St Mary's Straits, Michigan. Here were to be seen a few detached groups of U.S. soldiers, in their blue and gray uniforms; but it seemed a quiet spot enough, though a frontier station. There is in process of construction here a very large canal, close to the one we passed through. This is designed as a ship canal, and is to have but the ~~two~~ locks of ingress and egress, with eighteen feet depth of water, and eighty feet of width, in the lock itself. This fine work was in a very forward state, and exhibited some very excellent and massive stone masonry. Here we entered Lake Superior—the largest body of fresh water in the world, and, Lake Huron excepted, the stormiest; for it is a very sea in itself, and capable of throwing up waves of oceanic power and magnitude. Its waters are of the most pellucid character, and cold as ice itself; in fact they are ever so, and keep the temperature of its shores cool in summer, moderate in winter.

We experienced ourselves a marked change in the atmosphere—the weather, except in the direct rays of the sun, being quite cold and frosty.

On Monday we called at Silver Islet, where there is an extensive lead mine worked by an American Company, and yielding a fine return, estimated at seven to eight thousand pounds worth of ore per month. Next we reached Prince Arthur's Landing (not that he ever was there, but so named by Sir Garnet Wolseley in his honour), in Thunder Bay—the Lake Superior terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway to the far North-west. That portion of the line connecting with Winnipeg is already in a forward state—about one hundred miles at each end, out of a distance of three hundred miles, being (while this was written) nearly completed. The central sections, however, present, I understand, some serious engineering difficulties, and may retard completion of the full distance for three years yet. It was here we were so annoyingly diverted from our course, to proceed up the river to a place called Fort William, to discharge railway iron, involving a delay of nearly thirty hours. The river itself is the Kaministiquia, a thoroughly Indian name, well in keeping with the many wigwams dotted along its banks. The scenery here was more varied, with high hills; one height—M'Kay's Mountain—close under which we were moored—being 1200 feet high; and Thunder Cape itself is 1400 feet. During the hours we were here so unwillingly detained, we relieved our weariness by two or three walks ashore; but there was little to interest, and we mostly paced up and down the line of railway, here already laid with rails for sending plant forward to the front.

Right glad were we to make our last start for Duluth, about five P.M. on Tuesday, 1st June, being our fifth from starting on what was to be in all under a four days' voyage! All concern was now to reach Duluth in time for the train leaving for Winnipeg. This the captain felt sure of doing; but, as the following day grew on, one felt very doubtful; and finally doubt



was resolved into certainty by arriving just before five, for a train timed to start exactly at that hour. I had therefore no alternative but to remain at Duluth overnight.

One cannot forbear a few more details about the steamer *City of Owen Sound*, before finally leaving her. Her owners had chosen, without any notice to us, to divert a passenger-steamer, 'noted'—as by their own advertisements—'for speed, safety, comfort, and elegance,' to purposes utterly foreign thereto—to convey many tons of rails to a port not included in the usual ports of call. Here they remained twenty-four hours unloading day and night—giving us the benefit, the whole night through, of the most deafening row ever experienced at such hours. To my remonstrance on such a gross breach of contract in a very temperate note, I never received the least reply. I would therefore warn travellers by this route to exact something more than mere polite assurances from the office in Yonge Street, Toronto. But this boat was our first experience of those American passenger-steamers of which we had heard so much. I have been informed our judgment is scarcely just, for it was early in the season—passengers were few, and our experience exceptional. Be it so. Still, to parties coming from England—just off, too, such an admirably ordered ship as Allan's *Sardinian*—to experience the doings on this country boat was trial enough; and unused to the ways of the people, we naturally took the manners and customs exhibited as illustrative of Canadian life under like circumstances.

The commander of the steamer was a quiet, courteous person, almost always at his post on the upper-deck, and rarely seen below. The purser, an Englishman, an ex-officer of our well-known Peninsular and Oriental Company, was also courteous, and without reproach; but as for the rest, it seems in the retrospect like a farce. The steward was an abomination—a priggish young fellow, always with a cigar in his mouth, and his gold-laced cap on the side of his head. He would come and seat himself down by my wife, and talk with the most perfect equality, and all the snubbing one could give him scarce

restrained his impertinence. The waiters, while we were sitting at the tables in the saloon (otherwise than at meals), were always, though nearly touching one, whistling at the top of their bent; while the stewardess, a few feet off, would be also singing at her best power. The so-called 'lady's room' was usually occupied by the steward, or chief engineer, fast asleep on the sofas; while the waiters were as frequently in possession of the couches of the saloon. In fact, the ordeal was the severest trial of one's patience. We were fain to put up with it, believing it to be the usual order of things. I am told I should have made complaint; but if one is to judge from the result of my remonstrance on the vexatious and unwarrantable delays of the voyage, I must conclude that complaint would have been here equally unavailing. The limit, however, of audacity seems reached when such a state of things occurs in ships described as 'noted for their speed, safety, comfort, and elegance!'

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#### CHAPTER IV.

Leave Duluth—Railway classes in America—Fine scenery—A perilous road—Heavy thunder-storm—Glyndon junction—A ruffianly baggage-man—Suitable luggage-trunks—Slow travelling—Late arrival at St Boniface and Winnipeg—Dearth of hotel accommodation—Short commons and a rough shake-down.

WE were now at Duluth, in the state of Minnesota, on United States soil. Having bestowed our luggage in the baggage-room of the station, we were driven to a hotel in the town called the *Wakely House*, kept by an Englishman of that name, a very worthy sort of person, who informed me that, at the period of the first Exhibition in Hyde Park, in 1851, he was a guard on the Great Northern Railway, since which time he had been out here. Duluth is built on the side of a rocky hill, and this hotel was up a pretty sharp ascent. It was a quiet unpretentious place—not much of it, when compared with European hotels; but it contained in the public room an exceedingly handsome

grand pianoforte of superb tone, which was a source of much gratification to our party.

I was most agreeably surprised, after much ~~much~~ <sup>what</sup> one hears at home, of the roughness and jealousy of 'Britishers' on the part of Yankees, to find how very courteous and civil they were. It was really quite refreshing, after so much of the very contrary we had met with on the Canadian side since landing in the country. As an illustration, I had occasion to go to the post-office to post letters. I had only English money, and nothing under a sovereign—which I tendered, saying I had only lately arrived from England. The postmaster could not change, but nevertheless stamped my letters, saying: 'Pay when you have change.' How many postmasters in England would have done this? In the shops, as elsewhere, the same courtesy was conspicuous, and I am pleased to pay special tribute to it.

Duluth, however, is a dull place, remarkable only for its large number of churches and chapels. One never saw so many within so small an area before. There are no less than fourteen to a population of four to five thousand at the utmost. It was once expected to be a second Chicago—and is the grave of much ill-directed speculation. Situated at the western extremity of Lake Superior, it looks the very spot for a brisk trade; but the Northern Pacific Railway, *via* St Paul to Chicago, diverts, I apprehend, the bulk of the traffic.

At five P.M. we had to start for the last division of our long journey, a distance of about five hundred miles—that is, from Duluth to Winnipeg. After our experience of 'first-class' railway travelling—specially from Montreal to Toronto—we resolved to take no more 'first-class' tickets, and engaged 'second-class,' determining to have Pullman-cars at night for the ladies. This, however, proved *the* difficulty, and is, I believe, the *one only* maintained distinction between the two classes out here; for, on applying for 'sleeper tickets,' they were refused, as 'contrary to the regulations.' Here again the courtesy of the Yankee (I use the term without the least intention of disrespect) was conspicuous, for, on explaining the circumstances,

and the large sum paid for our fares, he very obligingly gave me the tickets, and we then found the journey through was in precisely the same cars by day as if 'first-class' tickets had been taken. It would not, however, be likely that my success would be obtained a second time. The journey from Duluth, so long as the light lasted, was through the finest and most picturesque scenery we had yet seen on this continent. Some of it was exceedingly grand—rapids flowing down from rugged heights, over huge rocks and boulders, through a finely wooded country; but one awfully perilous for travellers—the railway cuttings being on the sides of steep rocks, and ever and anon over broad chasms on frail trestle bridges, that some day will inevitably develop an appalling accident. It made one's blood quite curdle to look down as one passed over these apparently frail structures.

We stopped twenty minutes for supper at a small station called Island Lake, and at midnight, for half an hour or more, our train was shunted at the junction at Brainerd, where we crossed the Mississippi by a bridge, the scene of a serious railway accident, where it sank and engulfed the whole train, which was fortunately a goods one, and not of passengers, or the loss of life had probably been terrible. From this point, to seven or eight A.M., we experienced a most terrific thunder-storm and downpour of rain; and our train at one time was brought to a standstill by it, as it looked as if the roadway would be fairly washed away. However, we got on in some fashion to Glyndon, where we breakfasted, and the ladies had to quit the sleeping-cars. Here we got thoroughly wetted in efforts to save our luggage from being exposed as it was, without any protection, to the full force of the storm, for even passengers had to change carriages right out in the open, with no covering from the weather.

At Crookstone we dined about noon. At St Vincent, about five P.M. we made our last change, and were kept waiting for the Winnipeg train fully an hour; a very vexatious delay, seeing we had still quite seventy miles to go over the very worst part

of the line. I had here quite a personal encounter, with the baggage-man. My luggage—of which we had about twenty packages—had already endured nearly thirty transfers since it left our home in Devonshire. Scarcely realising such an amount of changes, or the *very rough* usage it would receive, some of my packages proved hardly strong enough. I would urgently advise parties coming out here to obtain, if possible, some of the usual American luggage-trunks. They are readily procurable in Liverpool, and out here are decidedly cheap. They are strongly framed and bound, and are rounded and specially strengthened at the corners, on which Americans make all their trunks to revolve, twisting them about lengthways on a corner; an ordeal few English trunks are designed to stand, or if heavy, they soon shake to pieces under the strain. At every place of change we invariably looked after the luggage, lending a hand to prevent rough treatment. We met with no incivility anywhere on this account till we reached St Vincent. Here two or three of our packages being nearly in pieces, I civilly asked the baggage-man to handle them as gently as possible; his reply to which was ordering me in tones of imperial importance to 'stand back,' and then hurling the luggage with all his force from one end of the car to the other. Unable to brook this wanton destruction of one's property (some of these cases containing china and other fragile articles), I interposed to protect it, which at once precipitated a 'Greek meet Greek' encounter I would willingly have avoided. Some of the other passengers interfering, the ruffian threatened them with personal violence; but I nevertheless succeeded in my object, and having lodged a complaint against the man the instant we arrived at Winnipeg, and having followed it up energetically the following day, I had the satisfaction of being assured of his dismissal, at least from a position for which he was so unsuited. This was imperative in the interests of the general public, whose property, as I had too good opportunity of observing, undergoes intolerable injuries at the hands of rough fellows of his stamp.

It was a miserable apology for railway travelling these last few miles. We were more fortunate, however, than many, as our train did not run off the track—a misadventure that at this period was happening almost daily on that portion of the Canadian Pacific Railroad.

It was midnight when the train reached St Boniface. All was darkness, confusion, and hurry. There was an omnibus charging fifty cents (2s.) for each passenger to the hotels. This, for six, was too much of a good thing; so only the ladies rode, and myself and sons walked up.

The *Queen's Hotel*—the only really good one in Winnipeg—we knew to be shut up through the failure of the proprietors. The next was the *Pacific*, and to this we at once moved on, only to find it filled, and without any accommodation. On therefore we went to the next, the *Grand Central*. Here, too, every room was occupied; but the proprietor, seeing our plight, and the late hour of the night, very obligingly offered to make some temporary arrangement for the ladies, if we gentry could roost upon the floor, an alternative far from pleasant after thirty hours of travel, but there was no appeal. On our application for supper, we found, all servants being 'gone to bed' (and in these latitudes servants are a particularly independent class of the community, and never allow their energies to be impaired by late hours of work), 'a cold bite' was the only resource; and to this, with some fairly good bottled ale, we applied ourselves, and then retired to our improvised dormitories with anything but a cheerful sense of Manitoban hospitality; albeit, we were fully satisfied, that the proprietor, Mr Sinclair, had done his best for us, and that we might have gone farther and fared worse.

We had now reached Winnipeg, our travelling destination, five thousand miles from England, and had accomplished the distance in twenty-two days, including stoppages. We had arrived all of us safe and sound, and for this at least we felt truly thankful.

## CHAPTER V.

Winnipeg—A broad and rough street—Business establishments—Dearness of provisions—Buildings—Roads and soil—Bogs and swamps—A slough of despond—Apathy of the Government—Small encouragement to emigrants—Hotels, clubs, churches, &c.

OUR midnight introduction to the capital of Manitoba had not been very prepossessing. We had now to make its acquaintance by daylight; and this, after a good breakfast, we soon essayed to do.

Winnipeg,\* then, at present consists of one immense street called Main Street, for to this the business of the city is almost entirely restricted. Its width is about one hundred and thirty feet, and certainly gives the impression of being twice the width it ought to be; the roadway being the roughest and rudest, it may safely be affirmed, of any street in the world of its size and importance. In strange contrast with this uncivilised-looking thoroughfare (especially after rain), made doubly so by its enormous width, are many of the shops that on each side subtend the footway—here a boarded promenade of ten feet wide. Some of these are really fine shops, and would be deemed so anywhere at home or abroad. Among the finest are the establishments of Stobart, Eden, & Co., drapers and carpet warehousemen, whose headquarters, I am informed, are in London, England.

Ashdown's ironmongery establishment is one of large dimensions, occupying a lofty brick building with frontage on two streets. Ironmongery is here termed 'hardware,' and of these trades there are several excellent shops, including Mulholland Brothers, Germain, Horsman, and others. The drug establishment of Messrs Caldwell & Co. is also a fine building; while Scott & Co., upholsterers, and Hodges, china and glass, have

\* A year having elapsed since this account was written, it is necessary to bear in mind that Winnipeg is making extraordinary progress in the way of building—houses and even whole streets spring up as if by magic.—ED.

extensive premises. And indeed there are numerous others of every trade, many of them scarcely second to the above, and many fresh establishments are continually opening up. Of all these, however, there is none to compare with a magnificent building the Hudson's Bay Company are erecting for their stores at the south-east end of the town. This is a really grand edifice, the foundations constructed of stone taken from their now famous Fort Garry, and it has some four different business stories intended to accommodate each department of their extensive trade. The whole is designed in good taste, being executed in iron, freestone, and red brick, all imported from the south; and seems likely to form a very prominent feature in this wonderful town for many years to come. There can be no doubt there is business doing in Winnipeg; and its almost unprecedented rise and progress within the past six or eight years gives it every promise of becoming a fine city. It is, and must of necessity continue to be, the chief town of this whole region. It is the point of arrival of all who come to Manitoba. Here almost universally each comer is landed with simply his luggage and personal effects. Before he can advance a step further, he will have to provide himself with everything needed for his pioneer life; and as this is almost exclusively agricultural, the necessary articles must be here obtained. Hence establishments for the sale of every kind of farming implement—as ploughs, harrows, reapers, mowers, wagons, &c.—are numerous and well supplied. Stables for the sale of horses, draught oxen, milking cows, &c., also abound; and in these trades especially a very extensive business must be done, for though nothing like the number of immigrants have come this year (1880) that ought to have come—for reasons I shall hereafter allude to—yet their numbers are sufficient to be something more than appreciable.

There are many grocers' shops, and one would think large profits must be made in this line of trade, for groceries are excessively dear—many of them three and four times over their cost in England. Sugar, that great necessary of life, is especially



so, none being under 6d. per lb.; and the loaf and finer moist, 7½d.; sultanas, 10d.; raisins and currants, 7½d.; macaroni, 10d.; rice, 5d. Tea—strange to say—though it all comes, I believe, from England, is about the same price as at home, and fully as good; but such items as candied peel and the finer groceries are often twice and three times over home prices. Preserves and jams, too, of every kind are disproportionately dearer. But the strangest circumstance is that the tinned (here termed ‘canned’) meats, cheese, lard, bacon, &c., which are now supplied at such very moderate prices in almost any town in the United Kingdom from this very country (Canada) or Chicago, command nearly double as much up here. There is no cheese under 1s.; lard (American), sold in cans in England at 5d. and 6d. per lb., is here 7½d. to 10d. The meats are 2s. 6d. per 2-lb. can, which we could purchase in Exeter, to wit, for 1s. 4½d. Bacon, too, is often 10d. for what was there sold as ‘best American smoke-dried,’ at 6d. and 7d. per lb. Butter, on the other hand, though it is somewhat difficult to purchase good at shops, is rarely above 1s., except during the winter months. Bread is about the same as at home; but we found it difficult, at least in summer time, to get good sweet bread unless home-baked—the bakers’ bread always seeming to possess a sour, fermented taste. Meat at the butchers’ stalls in the market—and in town as yet there is no other source to procure it—is really very little under the price of meat to a cash customer in the west of England. Beef, 6½d. to 7½d.; veal, 6½d.; pork, 6½d.; but mutton is very dear, 10d. to 1s. per lb., and very inferior then. The beef, as a rule, seems the best meat. House rent in Winnipeg is very high, £60 to £80 per annum being a rent for a very small house. Hence building, both business premises and terraces of dwelling-houses, is going on rapidly. Most houses are built of wood; but a new system has been lately introduced—with the best effect, for it is a wonderful improvement—of casing over the wooden frame with a one-brick thickness of pale straw-coloured bricks. This is termed ‘veneering,’ and the effect is to give externally

the appearance of an entirely brick-built house. Architects are fairly numerous in Winnipeg, and many of the houses now being erected have a decided claim to artistic merit. One thing that strikes a new-comer especially, is the light character of the structures, which are better adapted for an Italian than an Arctic clime, such as this is during at least a third of the year.

The great drawback to the city—one that seems almost insurmountable, for it is common to the whole Province—is in the roads. They are awful! It would be difficult to impress the mind of any one accustomed to the good macadamised roadways of England, with what Manitoban roads are like. The soil is a greasy and most tenacious loamy clay, varying greatly according as the black loam—almost as black as soot—or the whitey-brown clay predominates. Where the latter exists, as is most general, directly rain falls, these roads—which are simply the natural soil unaided by any attempt to macadamise or improve them—become tracks of a chain, or ninety-nine feet wide; bounded, as in the high-road to Portage-la-Prairie, by the line of telegraph poles on the one hand, and on the other by some line of fence, which indicates the limits; but any attempt to make a ditch on either side, or to drain, or raise the roadway above the surrounding country—usually the open prairie—is almost entirely wanting. These tracks run oftentimes through swamps, or muskegs, which form holes, or bogs of slime and clay, so tenacious, that it will take the hair off a horse's legs in attempting to brush it off.

Some of these holes are specially notorious; and few travellers in Manitoba will be in ignorance of that fearful bog—a very 'slough of despond' to so many unfortunate immigrants going west—at about seven miles from town, known as 'Murray's Swamp'; a dreadful hole immediately opposite the residence of one of the Members of Parliament of the county (Selkirk). Had as it is, a few hours' labour at any time might have made this place fairly passable, but, left by this worthy representative of the people to its natural condition, it must too often have

provoked at once the curse and the despair of many so often well-nigh hopelessly stuck up to the axles of their wagons in its tenacious mire, demanding almost superhuman exertions of men and beasts to extricate them, and arresting the whole traffic—at times considerable—of the North-west for half-hours at a stretch!

How far these roads *in time* may be improved it is hard to say. No doubt they present grave difficulties from the nature of the soil, the frequent recurrence of rainfalls during summer, and the want of suitable materials for road-making. But, allowing for all this, it cannot be gainsaid that the Government—local or Dominion, or both—have exhibited the most culpable apathy in *doing nothing*, for so long a period, to aid the unfortunate immigrants to its lands in their toilsome journey westward from Winnipeg towards the country of their adoption; not even keeping in repair the many bridges and culverts across streams and swamps—once, indeed, constructed, but since left to their fate, and presenting oftentimes the most dangerous pathway for horses. Such apathetic conduct can little tend to attract immigrants; nor can it be wondered at that ‘The States,’ who make the settlers’ interests so much more paramount a consideration, obtain the greater number of the immigrants from Europe arriving on the American continent. The Canadian Government will find that a zealous concern for the welfare of those who seek its shores must, in the long run, do far more to attract settlers than all the puffing exertions of agents, or the one-sided statements of pamphlets circulated so freely in the United Kingdom to secure this end. Every immigrant, as a rule, remains more or less in constant communication with friends and relations at home; and letters become advertising mediums of far greater power and publicity than any number of anonymous pamphlets. A government known for its good treatment of settlers will always attract; while unconcern, neglect, or the pursuit of courses still more injurious to their interests, must as surely repel.

Hotels in Winnipeg are somewhat numerous, and nearly all

of these houses of entertainment have rooms for breakfast, dinner, and supper (the three usual and only meals in Canada) open to all comers; and many contract by the week or month; a great advantage for the many bachelors in the town, who thus so conveniently get board supplied at fairly cheap rates. There are one or two clubs in the city whose members mess there. Indeed, it is surprising more do not exist, for there can be few cities of its size with such a numerous population of young unmarried men, employed and unemployed. There are several churches with spires, the most conspicuous by far being that of the Knox Presbyterian Church, with an altitude of 130 feet—a landmark for a considerable distance. Holy Trinity is the Church of England's most numerously attended church—a good-sized building, but quite inferior as a structure to the Scotch, and even to some of the Methodist churches out there. There is a Church of England cathedral at St John's at north-west end of the town, and another church also. A large Roman Catholic cathedral is now building not far from Trinity Church. The population includes a considerable number of French (Canadians) and French 'half-breeds,' and hence Roman Catholics are numerous, and possess a cathedral there, and many collegiate and scholastic institutions on both sides of the Red River.

Far more numerous than the churches, however, are the drinking-saloons. These appear to do a pretty brisk trade; but there is an efficient and vigilant police force, and the magistrate's levées attest that disorder at least is not practised with impunity in Winnipeg.

The city, however, is in such a progressive state that a description of it, however truthful to-day, would, at least as regards buildings, be scarcely recognisable a year hence. The enterprise of its citizens bids fair to make it worthy of being styled the metropolis of the North-west.

## CHAPTER VI.

Start for the country—A monopoly—Bad roads—Pleasing appearance of the scene—Silver heights—Sturgeon Creek—St Charles—The open prairie, and mosquitoes—A rude ferry—Uncertain road—Our 'farm and cottage'—A wretched shanty and a rough night—Contrast between promise and performance—Making the best of things—Ploughing and sowing—Fertility of the soil—Improved circumstances—River steamers—Domestic economy under difficulties.

WE stayed four days in Winnipeg to procure necessary supplies of furniture, &c., but were anxious to see and occupy our future dwelling at Headingly, located on the southern side of the Assiniboine River. There was much difficulty in obtaining any information as to its whereabouts. It seemed strange that, though only ten miles from the capital, no one could be found to give any reliable information as to the locality. Advice had been forwarded from Duluth to the party 'in charge,' saying we should be there by a certain date, and requesting all might be ready for us. As the place was already taken, there seemed no necessity for incurring the expense of hiring a conveyance to go down and look at it. After all the correspondence with the owner in England, further inquiry seemed superfluous; so, having procured all things presently needful, two teams were engaged to convey us and our goods to our destination, on Monday, 7th June.

A little incident, however, now occurred, illustrative of the effect of a Protective government—a policy that seems the radical defect of this country. The main portion of our luggage had been left at the railway station at St Boniface on our arrival. This was on the opposite side of the Red River, and thence it had to be fetched. The river here is about eighty yards wide, and is crossed by a floating bridge running on a single chain. Although it is the key of the whole North-west, the local government had, we found, granted a monopoly of this bridge to a man with a single chain! On sending a team to fetch this luggage about eight A.M., all traffic was found to

be suspended, the chain of the bridge being out of order—no unusual occurrence—and so it continued down to four p.m., compelling us to lose the whole day, and suspending the entire traffic of the country!

Another day of hotel expenses for six was thus added to us—but, on the following day, we were more fortunate, and I started and got all our railway goods over by eight a.m. The teams, however, were not ready for a final start until one; far too late in the day to commence a journey to an unknown locality, over roads of which we had not then the experience so soon after to be painfully acquired. Shortly after starting—the roads being then bad beyond description—one of our drivers inquired of some parties coming towards town as to their state and condition further on. The reply afforded us much amusement at the time, as we thought it was a joke. 'First-rate, only a little rough.' I walked the journey through; but, as each rapidly succeeding hole jerked the ladies—who had been comfortably established on mattresses—nearly off the conveyance, the 'first-rate, only a little rough,' seemed to be drolly illustrated. As a matter of fact, however, the statement was truer than it seemed. The roughness of Manitoban roads is the least part of their badness. So long as they are dry, roughness is nothing. They require to be a little wet to show themselves to advantage, and it may safely be affirmed they can then nowhere be matched the wide world over.

The first five miles to Silver Heights, ruts notwithstanding, rather pleased us. We passed a number of fair-sized houses, a church and parsonage (St James's), many fields of growing wheat, inclosed with wire-fencing, and the general view of the country, though flat, was decidedly agreeable. At the village of Silver Heights, too, there is a brewery of good dimensions, a flour-mill, store, and post-office, and several attractive houses with good and well-tended gardens, which give an air of civilisation to a scene in many features very defective in this respect. After passing Silver Heights, the next place is Sturgeon Creek, with a bridge over a small gully, about three to four yards

wide in itself only; but the bridge, a timber one, may be thirty yards long, and is said to be the first ever built in Manitoba. The parish of St Charles, with a post-office, store, and hotel or saloon, and many farm-houses about, was passed about seven miles from town, and then we entered on the genuine prairie, the evidence of which we received in the form of a furious onslaught of mosquitoes—the first we had experienced, for it was yet early, and these pests rarely appear before the beginning of June.

We were now almost out of view of houses of any kind, and began to be anxious as to our route, the teamsters seemingly knowing as little of it as ourselves. From a passer-by, however, we found we had three miles further to go to the post-office at Headingly, a place pointed out to us on the distant horizon. Rain was now threatening; the day was running on, and our position not devoid of some anxiety. About five we reached the point indicated—a roadside inn, a general store, and a post-office. Here we found that about a quarter of a mile to the left, brought us to the ferry across the Assiniboine River. Such a contrivance!—a scow guided by a feeble old man, and a many-spliced rope, to cross a river running six miles an hour and fully 100 yards wide. How we got over seemed a marvel! How the horses, with heavy loads behind them, ever got on to such a craft, and still more, how they ever got off—was wonderful! Verily, no English horses would have faced the difficulty in harness for a moment.

Arrived, however, safely on the other side, after about half an hour's delay—encountering a heavy downfall of rain that sadly wetted us and our goods—we found we were three miles too far up, and had that distance to return on the southern side of the river. If the road was bad on the north side, here it had no existence at all—in fact, was a very uncertain track; and being warned to be careful or we might get out on the prairie and lose our way entirely, night coming on, and with it evidently much rain, our position was by no means enviable. The track was so partial, we were in grave doubts as to our



course, and at last became persuaded we had gone wrong, and had to return. Parts of the road were very wet and swampy, but at last we came to quite a serious bog that caused the drivers some concern as to their horses, now getting tired, being able to pull through. <sup>a</sup>Observing this, my wife became alarmed, and could not be persuaded to ride through, but insisted on going over on foot, thinking to do so along a line of fence rails that edged the swamp. The teams pulled through safely enough, the horses proving themselves first-rate; but my wife, in her confidence, floundered into the mire knee-deep, and it was with no small difficulty we got her out; losing much time, which, just then, darkness coming on, was so valuable. Soon after this, however, we met a young fellow ploughing with a yoke of oxen, and got him to guide us into the right road. Supposing him to be a young labourer, I offered him a gratuity, which he declined, and we were much amused afterwards to find that his father was a well-to-do gentleman, and a justice of the peace for the district!

We now came upon the residence of Mr H—, whom we knew to be our future immediate neighbour, and found him and his wife most cordial and 'hospitable. It was a relief to us indeed to receive their hearty welcome'; but distressing—tired and travel-stained as we were at that late hour of the day—to hear them say our house was 'quite unfit' for our occupation. Nevertheless, though they urgently offered quarters for the ladies, we preferred to hold together 'for better or worse,' and to face whatever was before us in company. Getting a good supply of delicious milk for tea, we passed on to be at length actual eye-witnesses of a place advertised in the first newspaper in the world, and the subject of so much after-correspondence.

It would be difficult to describe our dismay when we contemplated one of the dirtiest and most dilapidated-looking sheds called a dwelling-house we had ever entered! Certainly I had never kept my horses in a stable half so bad. However, we came out prepared to face difficulties bravely, and were not to be dismayed on the threshold.



It being nearly dark, the teamsters pressed to remove their loads at once that they might start homewards, as rain was so imminently threatening. I urged them to try and get shelter for the night at our neighbour's, but they were resolute to proceed; so we unpacked everything with the utmost haste, and had scarcely got our things in under cover before down came the rain in drenching storms that lasted, on and off, the whole night through. Anything more wretched and comfortless than our condition can ill be conceived! All was dirt and rubbish within, aggravated by some evident attempts at whitewashing that had left the floors with spots of lime all over. We made an effort to brush out one room, got some furniture in, and laid down some mattresses, &c. for the night; having first got up a stove, lighted a fire, and made some tea, which, with provender brought with us, prevented our going to bed supperless. But the night! it was close—thunder, lightning, and rain, which came right through the roof and bedroom floor, down into the room we occupied, in such quantity as almost to rival a shower-bath! Mosquitoes were worrying us the night through, and we certainly closed our last day of travel, and first of acquaintance with our new home, under circumstances altogether unique as regards any previous experience.

The morning broke, bright, warm, and summerlike, though it was terribly wet and mucky around. The first thing was to take stock of all I had coveted to receive.

(1) I was to have a 'farm' of a hundred acres, ten acres of which were to be found broken and fenced; and were to be cropped (at my expense) with ~~wheat~~ and oats against my arrival. (2) I was to find a flower and kitchen garden. These too, according to the season, were also to be planted. (3) There was to be a stable for three horses, and sheds for some dozen head of cattle—the only reservation being that the roof would require repair before winter.

There were other advantageous conditions; let these suffice.

(1) The 'ten acres of tillage,' on inquiry—for the site of them was upwards of a mile off through swamps waist deep!—



were found to be, but five acres (that is, tilled and fenced); and they had been cropped on his own account by 'the man in charge;' but I was at liberty to *share* if I chose—the terms being about a fourth of the crop when<sup>r</sup> threshed! (2) The flower and kitchen garden had not the remotest sign of existence; all around the house being entirely open and unfenced, and the free pasture-ground of my neighbours' cattle! (3) The three-stalled stable and cattle sheds proved a collection of ruined log buildings that might indeed have been stables, or barns, or what not in happier days; but at present were simply roofless piles of manure and rubbish!

Had the circumstances been any less serious, one would have regarded the matter as a ridiculous hoax, and entered somewhat into the joke. But to have been brought, with a family, some five thousand miles to be made the victims of such humour, was indeed a jest too grim for anything but the deepest indignation. I resolved, however, in the first instance to visit my neighbour, Mr H——, of the previous evening. He, as an old settler, and a J.P. for the district, seemed a suitable party to take counsel with, and I accordingly carried the correspondence and agreement over to him. He entirely agreed with me as to the deception that had been practised, and urged my having the place put into good tenantable repair at the owner's cost. It was certainly difficult, under the circumstances, for him to propose, or for me to pursue, any other course. We had come too far to 'try back'—we were bound to make the best of the situation—legal proceedings were too remote, and the remedy would have been worse than the disease; so we determined at once to set to work.

Almost the first day the boys got about an acre around the house fenced in. A neighbour was employed to plough it up. We then set to and dragged and knocked it about until the surface soil was fit to receive seed, when we at once stocked about half of it with mangel, swede and common turnips, parsnips, carrots, onions, peas, potatoes, &c. We soon found that the soil in parts was most excellent—a fine black loam, which, after

a slight exposure to the sun and air, pulverised readily, and formed a perfect seed-bed. In other parts the clay lay near the surface, and worked hard and unkindly; but soon became good soil when thoroughly aerated and stirred with mattock or hoe. The season itself was very late; but we were later still. Nevertheless, it was deemed of first importance to try *everything* in order not to lose *experience* our first year—so essential to successful farming. My neighbour offering us the use of a few acres of tilled land, we put in, late as it was, some three acres of barley and half an acre of field potatoes; but we felt it involved some risk. The crops soon began to show themselves; as did also the weeds—which came up plentiful enough; but slugs, and such-like enemies to young herbage, though the season was a moist one, seem here to have no existence. Vegetation is luxuriant, everything seems to grow readily; but one observed that all *transplanted* vegetables and plants did much better than those growing in their original location. This is quite otherwise at home, especially as regards cucumbers, marrows, and such plants.

After a few weeks our house too began to assume some shape

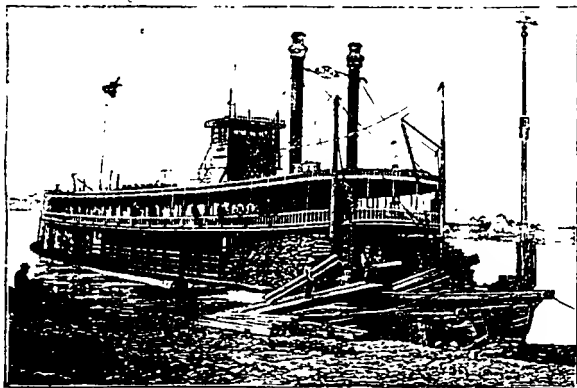


and appearance, though, except from one carpenter—and he a Nova Scotian shipwright in fact—we could get little or no

help; but I set to work myself, and papered the rooms, and even painted much of the woodwork; the effect being so satisfactory that we were complimented by some visitors lately arrived—men of education and refinement—who, on my apologising for a soldier's hut, declared it to be the 'most English-looking residence' they had yet seen in the Province! This was too flattering, but we were now moderately comfortable.

For forty dollars (£8), I purchased a cow and calf of a neighbour, and within seven weeks of leaving England, we had as good cream and butter on our table as we eat in Devonshire itself. Poultry, pigs, &c. soon followed. But as a question of food supply, our party of six was not so easily victualled. The summer months are the most difficult of the whole year in this respect, even for old settlers. A supply of fish on which we counted—being so close to a large river—proved worse than precarious; very few were brought us at all, and those poor and bony, scarce worth the dressing—called 'sun-fish.' Once or twice we got some 'cat-fish'—a really good variety, scaled like a salmon, but with white flesh, of course far inferior to the latter both in quality and size, but still a good firm-fleshed fish. There seems to be very little fish at all in the Assiniboine, caused, it is supposed, by the steamers that navigate the river during the season—huge galleried craft—with a large driving-wheel in the stern, precisely like the wheel of a water-mill. These create a prodigious commotion in forcing the big flat-bottomed boats upwards against the strong current they have to encounter in their voyages up to Portage-la-Prairie, Fort Ellice, and the North-west generally. Game was unobtainable, it being the close time; for though there are no actual game-laws, strict regulations are enforced with reference to the breeding season, or game would soon cease to exist at all. Meat during summer is only procurable in town; so we were often hard-driven for dinner supply, using, however, most frequently the Chicago tinned meats, and such other make-shifts as necessity imposed. Our neighbours, however, fared little better. In fact, during the warm months of June,

July, and August, very little animal food is eaten, or perhaps required. Bacon, salted pork, salads, vegetables, and pastry form the chief diet, and on this comparatively light fare we found ourselves quite as equal to energetic exertion as on stronger and more nutritive food. We had at first great difficulty in getting or even sending to town; a rapid river, running



River Steamer.

a flood stream, lay between us. No bridge, nor even a ferry—though I had been assured quite the reverse—existed between us and the capital; while the road on the south side was impassable from heavy and continuous rains. I had therefore to adopt the only expedient of getting a neighbour to put me over in a boat to the north side, and then walk up to Winnipeg—a distance of quite eleven miles—taking a satchel to bring back groceries, meat, &c. On one of these occasions I thus brought home no less than forty pounds! It was indeed a severe ordeal, as the weather was very hot, but one felt none the worse for it; though, as an illustration of the effect of different living, I doubt if one could have done as much in England. The steamers passing would occasionally bring us supplies; but as their hours of arrival were frequently at

midnight, it was not pleasant to be turned out at that hour under penalty of having one's goods thrown ashore on the muddy banks.

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## CHAPTER VII.

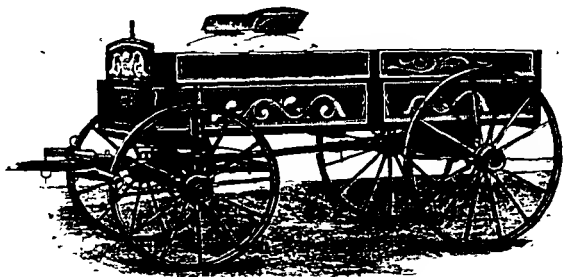
The prairie grasses—Purchase of horses, &c.—Canadian horses, wagons, harness, &c.—A journey of obstacles—Expedients—Swimming a river—Bogged—'Longest way round, shortest way home'—Haymaking—A thunder-storm—Lose our horses—Their recovery—Vegetables and cultivation—A fatted calf.

ABOUT the beginning of July, haymaking begins. There is little or no grass grown for hay in Manitoba. A few acres of 'timothy' may be seen here and there near town; but, as a rule, all hay supplies are derived from the natural grasses of the prairie. These grow to a luxuriant height and density; two and even three tons to the acre being freely asserted to be the usual yield. Having little or no corn, we were advised to go in for hay, a crop in the winter scarcely less profitable than corn itself. Accordingly we determined to cut and stack, if possible, a hundred tons.

Accompanied by my eldest son, we started from our headquarters for Winnipeg, about a dozen miles, to purchase horses, wagon, mower, and other implements needed for the work. As necessity demanded, we walked up, intending to drive our purchases home. After some unavoidable delays, we got suited with a team (pair) of good useful horses at McGregors'. They are about the largest dealers—and their number is considerable—in Winnipeg. The horses of any size used in this province are almost entirely imported from Ontario—and they are somewhat risky property, few being reliable until thoroughly seasoned, and then they should be six years old and upwards. McGregors receive large consignments almost every week during the season from Ontario, and as many as five hundred or more annually pass through their hands. The price of horses averages from two to four hundred dollars

per team, for good useful draught purposes. In exceptional cases they are purchased for both higher and lower figures. Indian ponies, thirteen to fourteen hands high—many of them showing good blood and shape—can be bought at from a hundred to one hundred and sixty dollars per pair; but they are not heavy enough for a farmer's purposes, though the class of horses usually employed in agriculture throughout Canada would astonish the heavy-land farmers of England. They are about the substance of phaeton or coach horses there. But then the land in this country is everywhere lighter itself, and above all they do not plough so deep, two inches being the average for freshly-turned sod, and five for back-setting of already tilled soil. The pair of horses we purchased would have made smart phaeton nags at home. One showed a good deal of English blood, and strange to say, was sold cheap on that account. The other was a French-Canadian mare. They were not very well matched, otherwise I would have paid much more for them, but they proved good useful workers.

We gave eighty dollars (£16) for our wagon—a thing as different from an English vehicle of that name as could well



be. It consists of four well-made wheels, painted red and lined black, similar to omnibus wheels, but all four are of nearly the same diameter—about three feet. On these a long shifting box is set, with a movable seat on springs to drive from. A

pole, not shafts, is used ; and the horses are harnessed to it, not by straps from the collar to the point as at home, but by a neck-yoke about three feet long. The effect of this at first seems very strange, as the horses hang so far apart in a descent ; but it is claimed to be indispensable in a rough country like this. It has no springs. The Canadian wagon, therefore, is something between a carriage and a country van. The harness, too, seems strange to an Englishman, as it is of the lightest character, and usually plated—quite carriage harness in fact, except as to collar and hames, which are stouter and heavier.

A mower (the 'Toronto'—deemed by us the lightest and best among many rivals) cost seventy-five dollars (£15). It is a better-finished machine than most English ones in use, and weighs about five cwt.

Our purchases being completed, at five p.m. we made our start for return home, but were at once confronted with one of the many difficulties in travelling in this country, especially to residents, as we were, on the opposite side of a rapid river. Arriving at the ferry at Fort Garry (Winnipeg) to cross the Assiniboine River, we found the scow broken down, and all traffic suspended for the day ; and on inquiry, were informed it would not be ready again until ten a.m. next day ; a pleasant announcement for us, twelve miles from home, and no other ferry for nearly fourteen miles, if then ! Late though it was, our getting home was indispensable ; so we set the horses agoing, notwithstanding our load, for the distant ferry at Headingly, determined, if possible, though the distance was very considerable, to be home that night. The horses went well ; and the roads, being dry, were unusually good ; and we should doubtless have accomplished our purpose, but two little matters prevented. The first was *rain*, that enemy to locomotion in Manitoba. Directly heavy rain comes on, the wheels clog, and carry the mud to such an extent as to reduce progress to a mere snail's pace. The second was the news that Headingly ferry was likewise laid aside ; and so, out in the open prairie, night coming on, and a deep and rapid river between us and



our haven, what was to be done? Fortunately, we were not without resource; we were nearly abreast of home, and a gentleman residing about half a mile above us on our present side, had recently called with kindly offers of service. We at once, then, determined to beat up quarters there for the horses for the night, and crossing the river ourselves by his boat, accomplish what we required. No sooner thought of than the thing was done. By nine P.M. the horses were comfortably stabled and fed; and we were safely back in our own home. But the journey was not over yet—horses and implements were still on the other side of the stream; they had to be taken across; but before this could be effected, we were to be actors in two rather exciting scenes.

Taking counsel on the morrow with my neighbour Mr H—, he proposed the swimming of the horses across, and leaving the wagon and its contents till such time as a ferry, somewhere or other, should be again in working order. Offering us his personal assistance in the operation—risky though so wide and rapid a river appeared—having no alternative, we commenced the venture. My neighbour rowing his boat, and my son taking his seat in the stern with a long rope attached, I forced the first, and as we deemed the most likely animal—the mare—into the stream, when the boat pushed off; but the beast would not swim a stroke, and allowed the current to sweep her down quite a quarter of a mile, when, at a bend of the river, she was safely landed, and the boat had to work back up stream. The second horse—probably seeing his mate on the opposite side—gave no trouble at all, and swam almost straight across; and thus both were safely got home without mishap.

A few days later, tidings came that a ferry was opened at St Charles's, about two miles down stream towards Winnipeg, whereupon we started with the team to fetch home the wagon. Between the place where it was left (in a wood) and the main road was a considerable stretch of swampy ground, through which we passed safely enough till we came at length to the



last of these swamps. The road itself being only just on the other side of it, tempted us, though it looked formidable, to risk a straight rush through. We had nearly reached the goal, when the horses suddenly stopped, and we saw that we were bogged! No pressure could induce the horses to struggle out—they could not stand, and fairly sunk down on their haunches to stay sinking deeper. Out we jumped into water up to our hips, unharnessed the nags, and led them back to dry land. Then the question was—what was to be done with the wagon? Any help was a forlorn hope; we knew we must depend entirely on our own resources, and, fortunately, they did not fail us. The mowing machine weighed fully five cwt., and only the previous day a party had offered to wager its value that there was not an unpractised man in the Province who could take this particular machine to pieces, and then put it together again. This feat we were now compelled to essay. Piece by piece we unscrewed it, carrying each separate part back to *terra firma*, until the whole was removed. We then took the body off the wagon, and carried it ashore, and finally each pair of wheels, until all was again on dry land, when we reshipped, and made a fresh start; the whole business occupying two and a half hours, but acting as a salutary piece of experience to teach us that, in this country at all events, 'the longest way round is (sometimes) the shortest way home.'

We now took advantage of fine favourable weather to begin our haymaking. An agreement was made with a neighbouring small farmer—a powerful Irishman—who had the right of cutting over some two thousand acres of particularly good prairie-grass land in the rear of our dwelling, to assist our boys at the work, on terms of my finding horses, mower, horse-rake, and every needful implement; he to give his labour and the grass, with help of his oxen as required, seventy tons to be put up for us, thirty-five for himself. On 15th July operations commenced. A tent was purchased, and the boys took it and all needful supplies, and camped out three miles off by the week, that is, from Monday morning to the Saturday night.

The prairie grass is wonderfully high and thick, and of excellent herbage, provided it is cut in season and before too ripe. But the power of the sun, and of a drying wind, always blowing, soon parches it up when it begins to ripen. We began in excellent season, as 20th July is fixed by law as the earliest date for commencing the cutting of the prairie grasses, and exception was taken to us for anticipating that date, and being first to cut. About two tons per acre seems the average, but where the land is swampy the grass grows very high, and there may be nearly three tons; but such grass is exceedingly coarse, and quite unsuitable for prime hay. Grass cut one day is put up in cock the following, and allowed to stand a few days to get the sweat out of it before stacking. As a matter of fact, we never saw any sweat, and believe the hay so put together without fermentation would be far better—the weather being thoroughly dry—if ricked at once without standing in cocks; but this would of course necessitate more labour, as the grass can be cut much faster than it can be saved. The cutting—about eight acres per diem—continued for about a fortnight, during which time thirty to forty tons of excellent hay were put away; when work was rather rudely suspended for a while. Rain had been threatening for some days, when one afternoon, about three P.M., an ominous-looking thunder-cloud appeared on the western horizon, and began rapidly to develop. I fully expected the working party on the prairie would at once strike their camp and come in with the horses, &c.; but, very unwisely, they failed to do this. A heavy storm of thunder, lightning, and rain broke over, and then cleared for a while. During the night, however, it broke out afresh, and frightened by the fierce raging of the elements, and maddened by the worry of the mosquitoes, always specially virulent at such times, the horses broke their tethers, and got clean away. In the morning, when looked for, they were nowhere to be found! So up comes one of the boys to see if they had arrived home; but they were strangers in the Province like ourselves, having only recently arrived from Ontario, and being of gregarious

habits, naturally gravitated towards the company of their fellows. I set an experienced horse-catcher residing in the neighbourhood at once on their track; but a week's delay elapsing without tidings, I grew anxious, and increased the reward of a pound I had already offered, to two pounds. I made this offer one morning on my way to town. On my return to the ferry—which was owned by the horse-catcher—I said: 'Well, Mr H——, what about my horses?' 'They are in your stable, sir,' he replied; 'they were found this morning.' This was a fact; the horses were brought in from about fifteen miles off on the Salle (Stinking) River, where they had been grazing for some days among a herd of other horses. There can be little doubt, however, this party *knew* where they were, and was awaiting a higher reward to send or fetch them in. It is a job of no unfrequent occurrence in these parts. Unfortunately, though the horses were thus happily recovered, the good English clothing, rugs, and headstalls they had on them when they escaped, never came back. After this the horses were never again kept out by night on the open prairie; but, during the remainder of the cutting season, they were stabled at home after their day's work.

Throughout this period, the seeds planted soon after our arrival were developing wonderfully. Although rain fell frequently, the soil was entirely free of those destructive enemies to incipient vegetation so common in England, especially during the recent wet seasons. Whatever was planted or sown grew, and that with surprising vigour. This was universally so. Lettuces attained to extraordinary dimensions. We had cabbage lettuces eighteen inches in diameter, and of proportionate height and weight; and cos lettuces of three and four pounds weight, of delicious crispness and flavour, fully bleached without tying, by the close compactness of their leaves. No soil so thoroughly repays the stirring of the hoe—hand or horse—or deeper application of the mattock. The effect is surprising. Six weeks after arrival, we had green peas on our table, and excellent chickens reared on the premises. Young

potatoes soon followed, and indeed an abundant supply of vegetables of many varieties.

As testimony to the rich quality of the prairie grasses, by which alone she was fed—ranging freely by day, and returning at night—I may here state that I sold, to a Winnipeg butcher, a calf at eleven weeks old, which weighed 32 lbs. to the quarter; a rare weight, as any home farmer will allow, for the calf of a cow no bigger than a Jersey. It always had its full, yet the cow found us in sufficient butter, milk, and cream, besides, for at least eight weeks out of the eleven. The calf itself was made quite a show of in Winnipeg market, such veal being rarely or never seen there. The custom here is to let cow and calf run together: the consequence being the calf soon learns to eat grass, and its meat, when killed, is nearly as red as beef itself. A wholly milk-fed calf of such size, therefore, was a novelty, and the price received of sixteen dollars (£3, 4s.), just upon sixpence per pound, was of course exceptional for the *quality*, as the *retail* price of veal never exceeds this figure.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

Wild duck shooting—Flies and mosquitoes—Early frosts and break-up of the season—Wild and other fruits—Beauty of the flowers—Purchase of land—The Provincial Industrial Exhibition—Inadequate cultivation of the soil—Bad harvest—Storage of roots.

ON 15th August duck-shooting begins, and indeed this date marks the opening of the shooting season, for after it 'all is fish that comes to net.' The ducks at first were very numerous, and easy to bag. Our boys brought in numbers, as also prairie chicken—a very delicious bird, meaty and game; and later on, many partridges (so they are termed here; but they are really far more like pheasants, as they roost in trees, and fly up with the flap of the wing peculiar to that bird). As a good deal of shooting goes on—Indians and half-breeds joining in it to sell

their bags in the Winnipeg market—the ducks soon become very wild, and before their departure further south in November, are very difficult to get at, indeed; involving so much wading through swamps, that ‘the game becomes scarce worth the candle.’ They, however, return again in renewed numbers in the spring.

About the middle of this month, too, the weather, which for about three weeks had been dry, hot, and favourable for corn ripening, began to break up, to be succeeded by constant rain, and a most unsettled condition of the atmosphere; in consequence thereof flies and mosquitoes were most trying. The latter usually begin to disappear about the middle of the month, but this must depend very much on the season; as so long as it is damp, and not too cold, they continue their unwelcome presence. This year they did not commence their visitations before June, but during that month and July they were trying to the last degree. By straining net or gauze over frames fitted outside to the windows, we successfully excluded them from the house; but, out of doors, specially of an evening and after rain, they were very bad. Of course we, as newcomers, enjoyed a fuller share of their attentions than older residents. This is always the case. Black flies are, however, on the whole, worse than mosquitoes, as there seems absolutely no way of extirpating them. They emanate from within, and, do what one may, there they remain. Though we destroyed them by thousands, yet fresh recruits were ever arriving to take their place. In a recent number of *Harper's Bazaar*—the illustrated paper of New York, answering to the *Illustrated London News*—was an article mentioning a drug known as ‘*Pyrethrum roseum*,’ or Persian camomile, as a sure specific against mosquitoes, and all other insect pests. It is a powder which, when piled up in a conical form, and ignited like a pastille, emits fumes that, while in no way injurious to human life, are utterly destructive of that of insects. This, if true, is really valuable. I endeavoured to get the drug in Winnipeg, but could not. I therefore ordered a supply to be in readi-

ness against the coming season. Oil of cloves is also stated to be an excellent antidote for bites. Anything that successfully destroys flies and mosquitoes will be a real boon out here, for they are an unmitigated evil.

On 7th September we had not actually the first frost—for we had had several touches of it before—but the first really sharp frost, which cut off potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers, marrows, and all tender vegetable life; and all late-sown cereals, not fully in ear, were done for. In this way we lost much of our barley crop that was sown too late; but we could not have got it in earlier. Tomatoes, like Indian corn, not unfrequently never ripen here, the season being too short; they should be gathered in before severe frost comes. The more forward ones will mature in a warm dry room; while the green make a very palatable preserve, exceedingly like tamarinds in flavour. This is a country where as yet there is little fruit, except the native wild fruits, of which there are many indeed; but the strawberry is both the earliest, the most abundant, and the best; and from it we made some excellent jam, quite equal to home-made from cultivated plants. Plums perhaps come next, though they were far from abundant, and are not larger than damsons; reddish in colour, and of rich flavour. They grow quite wild in the woods; and hearing, as we had surmised, that under cultivation they greatly improve, we planted some two dozen or more young trees in our garden to give them a fair trial. The high bush cranberries are probably next in value, as they are abundant, and make both excellent jams and jellies, which greatly improve by keeping. But there are many other varieties; indeed, all the small fruits of home seem indigenous here, as raspberries, currants, and gooseberries, but they are generally poor, and scant in quantity. The exception is the familiar hedgerow blackberry of the United Kingdom, which is, I apprehend, an importation into this country, for it is a regularly cultivated garden variety, taking its place with the raspberry, which it equals in size. In ordering fruit-trees from an Ontario nursery for our garden, a dozen 'blackberries' were



included, for which I paid 16s., or 1s. 4d. per bush—pretty well for our old hedgerow friend, and precisely the same price as for the best varieties of raspberries, gooseberries, and currants.

‘Sweets’ being an important element in the domestic economy of the Manitoban housewife, every available vegetable product, as well as fruit, is pressed into the service for preserving. Thus an excellent substitute for apple-jam is made from the pulp of vegetable marrows into which a little tartaric acid has been stirred. It is surprising how much this resembles the real thing. The dearth of fruit is one of the greatest drawbacks of this province. In Winnipeg it can of course always be got—sent up from the States—but being all subject to duty (that bane of the country!), and heavy freight charges, it is very expensive, a single plum costing 2½d. (five cents)! As the country develops, fruit will probably be extensively grown, and there is no reason why it should not yield all common English garden fruits. My nearest neighbour has a large garden, with upwards of 2000 trees of currants, gooseberries, &c., of the best sorts in it; but 1880 was a very bad year for fruit. He grows apples, too, but as yet these are of small size. He has the Siberian crab quite in its element, and a very fine variety, making delicious jam. Plums and cherries will also grow, and the vine. We are trying varieties of all these fruits. The essential thing seems to be protection of the trees from the cutting winds that so often prevail, and which prove far more injurious than any amount of mere frost. Flowers grow with a luxuriance quite unsurpassable; the variety and beauty of colour of the wild-flowers of the prairie alone testify to the suitability of the soil to floral development. But wherever they are cultivated, all the flowers known to British horticulture here flourish with surprising beauty. There were some gardens at Silver Heights, on our road to town, that quite dazzled one by the richness of their floral colouring—some of our commonest flowers, but so gorgeous in their colour—marigolds, snapdragons, phloxes,



sweetwilliams, balsams, &c. Any one, therefore, with a love for a garden, may here indulge it to his or her heart's content. Flowers should be raised early from seed, and put out.

The land and place we were occupying were simply rented. I held them of the owner in England, with option of purchase if approved. He, however, set down the value at £600, and was unwilling to give the refusal at £500. When we arrived, it was soon made clear that the estimated value of the property was on a par with the description given us of the house and land—very far beyond a sober estimate. Adjoining this property was another 'lot,' as they are termed, vacant and for sale. It had been occupied by a young Irishman, who built a house on it, and lived there for some while, without, however, attempting to cultivate the land in any way, and finally sold it and returned home, leaving his residence—one of the usual log houses of the country—to go to ruin. Thinking it would be better to own some land than to rent it, I entered into negotiations with the agent, and purchased this 'lot,' with the two hundred acres which it comprised, at the price of £180 (900 dollars). The property being within twelve miles of the capital, and close to where the South-western Railway was expected to run, we deemed this a very low figure. Of course it is open, like all the 'river lots,' to the very serious objection of its ungainly shape—a parallelogram of six chains width, or frontage, on the river, and four miles depth into the prairie; but it is high, good farming land, and by acquiring, as opportunity offers, more frontage, or width, the outer two miles of the excessive depth might be disposed of hereafter. A long strip of land always has this advantage, that ploughing can be carried on with much greater rapidity than in the (comparatively) small and unevenly shaped inclosures at home. In the former, a furrow a mile long can be ploughed without a turn.

In the middle of September was the agricultural show, or 'industrial exhibition' of the Province, held annually in Winnipeg. I was asked to become one of the judges in the Arts

department, and hearing another *ex-militaire* was to be associated in the duty, I accepted the honour; but the weather was at the time so deplorable, so incessantly wet and gloomy, that though I started early to attend, much of the road being under water, I was too late, and the judgments were made before my arrival.

The 'arts' are not in a very forward state in Manitoba; but everything must have a beginning. Rome was not built in a day; and it seems sound judgment thus to foster and encourage their développement in connection with agriculture. The inclemency of the weather further prevented our competing for some of the prizes, which, though I had previous misgivings, I was afterwards satisfied would have given us some. As one of the judges—though in another department—special facilities were afforded me for the leisurely investigation of all the classes exhibited; and it must be confessed they bore very eloquent testimony to the extreme fertility of the soil of Manitoba. Potatoes were something wonderful; they were fine generally everywhere, but here tubers of one pound each in weight were quite ordinary. The classes chiefly exhibited were the American Rose, well known at home—a wonderful cropper, and of extensive use; Snowflake—a good variety, but scarce; and the potato of the future—'Beauty of Hebron,' as yet very select, but of abundant promise. Beets of all kinds were most excellent; but the yellow globe mangels were decidedly inferior. We had better ourselves. The 'long red' were very fine. Turnips of all kinds were a great show. We had common turnips weighing fifteen and sixteen pounds each, or about three to the half-cwt.—a good meal for any beast; and not the soft pithy things large turnips too often are at home, but fine solid flesh, as their weight attests. We had 'swedes' and 'Aberdeens' as high as nine pounds and ten pounds each, although planted far too late for perfect development. Carrots grow wonderfully; in fact, there is no root that does not. Much, of course, depends on good cultivation and constant stirring of the soil. This is no doubt much neglected, for, in point

of fact, farmers have not the time out here for good husbandry—the season is too short. The season of 1880 was exceptionally late, hardly commencing until June, and in the beginning of September it may be said to have broken up. Besides the greed for extensive tracts of land, and not unfrequently the absurd configuration of it (six chains—132 yards—wide, for instance, and four miles long—containing two hundred acres), render it utterly impossible for a farmer to make the most of his time; and labour, moreover, is dear and very scarce, so that it may be affirmed, without much hesitation, that it is quite exceptional where any farm produces, even for the acreage under crop, a fair half of what the land might produce under good cultivation. As a rule, the ploughing is but mere scratching of the surface—two inches only for breaking, and five for back-setting and corn-tillage. It has always been held by old settlers that no crop could be got by sowing on the furrow of the first breaking of the prairie sod; but if so, it must be simply because the shallow tilth of two inches allowed no sufficient depth of soil for the seed to grow; for, in many cases this season, to my knowledge, parties sowing both wheat and oats on freshly-broken soil had excellent returns. It is true the season, which was a wet one, was favourable for the experiment; but, as a rule, Manitoba is a climate of copious showers during the season, and a deeper tillage would meet the difficulty if it were otherwise, as there is always an abundant reserve of moisture from three to six feet below the surface in the thawing out of the deep winter frost, effected only under a high summer heat. In a country where every man is a farmer, or ready to become one, there is but little science developed; and in consequence the farming is of the most elementary character. When land comes to be more valuable, and the resources of the country better tested, each acre will doubtless yield double what it does now. The great need is drainage; for the country abounds with swamps and almost bottomless bogs. Some day it may be intersected with 'rhines,' as they are called in Somersetshire—ditches acting both as a

fence and as the only available system of drainage for a flat country.

The season, though so late, was still further retarded by continuous rains—much corn was injured by it. What the harvest of 1879 was in England, just such was the 1880 harvest out here—rain, rain, perpetually! Some farmers were fortunate, and got their corn in and thrashed out at once, and the price being good (3s. 4d. for wheat, 1s. 8d. for oats), they did fairly; but, for the most part, corn stood in the fields in stiches (a 'stitch' is so many sheaves piled together) for weeks together, exposed to all the inclement weather. There, however, it was as well off as when housed, for in this country no one ever thatches a stack of hay or corn. It is simply roofed in with a good slope, some poles fastened down over it to keep the top from blowing off, and there left—corn until thrashed, hay till drawn away for consumption or sale. Thus very many bushels of grain were irretrievably damaged by rain in the stacks.

I know of no reliable return of the produce of farms, but there were many farmers in our neighbourhood who obtained little more than ten bushels to the acre of wheat, and oats were almost universally a poor and defective crop. The weight here of the bushel for oats is thirty-four pounds only, and wheat sixty pounds. Roots, except potatoes, are not at all generally grown. No cattle are fed on them; all the beasts killed are fattened on the prairie grasses alone. Such a thing as a stall-fed bullock is at present scarcely known, except perhaps for a Christmas show. The difficulty in extensive root-growing is the severity of the frost. Where or how to store them to escape a temperature of 50° below zero—as is occasionally the state of the atmosphere in winter here, a cold that penetrates four or five feet into the solid earth—is the question. Cellars are made by excavating the ground to a depth of six, eight, or even ten feet, and covering the top over with a thickness of three or four feet of manure and earth, and these will usually prove successful; but to make an

extensive cellar of this kind, capable of storing many tons of roots, costs a large sum of money. In time the value of roots will be better appreciated for winter feeding, and then probably they will be extensively grown and stored. At present, except as vegetables for table use, there is little or no demand for them.

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## CHAPTER IX.

The fall—Total destruction of our home by fire—An extemporised dwelling—Difficulty as to labour—Amateur house-fitting—The new *chénons*—Indian summer—Prairie fires—High price of hay—Work on the railway—Winter begins in earnest—Sleighing and sleighs.

THE 'fall' had been ever set before our imaginations as *the* period of the year *par excellence* for fine and enjoyable weather. Great, therefore, was our disappointment to find it so wet, gloomy, and impracticable. We were really quite thankful we had so little corn. The month of September—the harvest month—was wet, more or less, almost every day. It would be difficult to think of worse weather; cold, driving winds, with rain and sharp frosts; a glimpse of sunshine was a treat indeed. Just, however, as the weather was a little on the mend, a catastrophe overtook us that changed, for a time at least, the whole current of our emigrant life.

We had by degrees got our house into very fair habitable condition. The rooms had been papered; paint renewed; the mosquito nets all taken down; a good family stove had been ordered; we were beginning to get things snug for the winter—when the event—to this moment thoroughly inexplicable, occurred. The unusually early break up of the season had made all the hardware stores in Winnipeg late in receiving their winter stock of stoves; and having thus only one in our house, in the kitchen, we had been all passing the evening there. The boys had gone to bed, and were asleep. I had gone to my dressing-room to undress. While there I fancied I heard a noise outside, but ascribed it to a dog cracking a bone. I

returned to the kitchen to smoke a cigarette, observing a smell of burning, but the fire being low, where wood is always burning, this was not surprising. All of a sudden our eldest son came rushing down in his night-dress, exclaiming 'the house was on fire,' and the flames up to the bedroom window. I rushed out and found the whole southern side of the house in flames, that had already reached the roof. We shouted 'fire! fire!' with all our might, but it was past ten P.M., and the night very dark. Our nearest neighbour on our right, however, Mr A——, was promptly on the spot, and fetched a ladder, which unfortunately we had not. The river—fifty yards off, or less—contained water in abundance, but how was it to be brought to bear upon the burning mass? A brisk wind was blowing from the north, and this afforded a ray of hope. Down over very rough and broken ground to the river, we dashed for repeated buckets of water; it was pretty clear, however, we were exhausting our energies to little purpose. These wood-built houses, cased all over with weather-boards, when ignited, burn like matchwood; and the 'shingle' roof being of like material, gave but faintest hope of success. The house not being my own, one felt bound to make every reasonable exertion to save it; though in so doing we sacrificed precious time that should have been devoted to rescuing our own property. The rapidity with which the fire raged, when once it reached the roof, allowed little time for this. I made repeated visits to the up-stair rooms, but was almost suffocated with smoke; and here it was our loss was greatest—my wife losing all her clothes, one of the boys all his—and all our warm winter underclothes; besides many other useful things, and nearly all our glass that we had brought so safely from England; and worst of all, as most irreparable, three good English saddles, including that of my daughter, which grieved us much. The boys, however, worked like heroes, and rescued much property. Within an hour, nothing remained but a heap of glowing cinders, around which—kind neighbours having given the ladies shelter for the night—myself and sons, when we had first safely 'parked' our salvage, seated ourselves

in chairs, wrapped up in rugs—for it was bitterly cold—until six A.M., when we were hospitably entertained to a warm breakfast, which we greatly needed.

Our home was now gone—it was imperative at once to find shelter not only for ourselves, but for the numerous goods and chattels now out in the open, and which so far the weather, though threatening, had spared from injury. In the 'lot' recently purchased adjoining us, were the walls and floors of what had once been a small but tidy house. The roof was well-nigh gone, and the elements had for a long time had their full run of the interior—though sufficient remained under favourable circumstances to afford some shelter. This was, however, our only place of refuge. Board and lodging being very hospitably offered my wife and daughter at a neighbour's, it was very thankfully accepted for them. By noon we managed to get all our goods into this tenement; and, pitching two tents alongside, made a start for housekeeping again.

The difficulty in this country, anywhere but close to town, is to get workmen at all. But, supposing one to secure them, an almost equal difficulty arises from the necessity of boarding, if not of lodging, them. This in our case was an obstacle indeed; nevertheless action was imperative, and I at once, therefore, set out to secure some one capable of plastering and thatching the house. After a time I so far succeeded as to get a man, an American (Yankee), to begin the job, and for a few days pretty steadily he stuck to it. Having entirely removed the remains of the old thatch, he started one morning, after a good breakfast, professedly to get reed to renew it, but he never again returned. Meanwhile bad weather again set in. In the middle of the night the rain came streaming through the upper floor on our devoted heads like a shower-bath, and shortly we were suffering as much from water as we had so recently been from fire. Fortunately, a lot of lumber (boards) had already been got down from Winnipeg for the building, and these boards we managed to get up over a portion of the roof, and thus to keep part of the house dry for shelter.

After some very serious loss of time, the thatch was at length completed ; but to obtain the services of a carpenter, or of any craftsman competent to fit up the interior of the house, was out of the question. I therefore undertook the job myself. In the first place I divided the tenement into three rooms down-stairs, and two up. Considering the outside walls were but a little over twenty feet square, it will appear that no room could be over ten feet square ; and in fact two were of that size, while the kitchen and general room was twenty by ten. The rooms up-stairs were ten by seven, and ten feet high in the middle. These rooms being in the roof, were ceiled from the rough rafters, by stretching coarse sheeting tightly over them, giving the appearance of a very firmly pitched tent. The walls were closely and evenly boarded inside, and then neatly papered, the whole having then a very snug and comfortable appearance.



The lower rooms were divided into one sitting-room, one bedroom, and the kitchen ; all likewise boarded and papered. To all I had to fit windows, and glaze them, and put up doors ; and to the outside a covered porch of entry. Two stoves inside made this extemporised residence so hot, that oftentimes, when the thermometer outside marked  $20^{\circ}$  below zero or more, the heat inside, near the fires, would be between  $90^{\circ}$  and  $100^{\circ}$ ,—far too hot.



By 1st December, just two months after the fire, the house was completed, and our daughter—my wife having already returned—was again able to find shelter under our own roof. Although the outside was whitewashed, and every effort made to give it a good appearance, the severity of the frost, and lateness of the season, prevented much finish being given to it. This was reserved for spring. The main thing was, warmth and comfort inside; and this, all things considered, was by general testimony well secured. Of course our quarters were very small—but, for the winter season, this was endurable, and indeed Hobson's choice was our only one—there was no alternative. I had always been 'a bit of a carpenter,' but never before dreamed of wholly fitting up a house—yet, when put to it, it is surprising what a man of resource may achieve, and that creditably.

Although we had thus involuntarily shifted our own quarters, the stables, cow-house, piggery, poultry, &c. were all down at their former location, and this was a serious inconvenience for us; but we had to accept it. The early part of November, for about a week, was characterised by some very pleasant weather—nights clear and frosty; days warm, bright, and summer-like. This is called 'Indian summer,' and is a spell of warm genial weather extending from three or four days to a fortnight, that usually immediately precedes the advent of the genuine winter season.

My own fire was by no means the only one that marked the 'fall' of 1880. This season of the year may not inaptly be termed the fiery one. From the beginning of October until December, the horizon is almost nightly lighted up by the conflagrations of the surrounding prairies—commonly called 'prairie fires.' These often attain to very serious dimensions, and frequently at night present a grand spectacle—the flames, though miles away, towering up to the heavens, and having a very threatening appearance, particularly under a raging wind—a condition too often prevailing in Manitoba. These fires, notwithstanding the wetness of the season, did unusual mischief in

the autumn of 1880, chiefly among the stores of hay accumulated during the summer by farmers, either for consumption by their stock at home, or for disposal in the market—hay being always in demand in Winnipeg. We heard of one farmer who had thus lost three hundred tons of hay, and of others less, though still very large amounts.

Residents on the banks of rivers, like ourselves, usually escape the ravages of fires, although in a drouthy season they have been known to come so far, and even cross the river itself under a high wind. Their origin is usually the act of some traveller or camper-out, throwing down fire carelessly among the long grasses of the prairie, which in the autumn are dry, and highly inflammable. A heavy fine is by law imposed on the originators of any such fires, but how seldom can they be known! Moreover, it is said they are often the work of parties interested in running up the price of hay in the markets, which through them is thus very much affected in value. Whether from this or other causes, its price in 1880 was unusually high. The constant wet and stormy weather had spoiled quantities of hay, and abruptly closed the saving season. We ourselves were unable to put together anything like what was intended, but the enhanced price fully compensated us; for whereas, in the previous winter, £1 to £1, 10s. per ton had been the outside value in Winnipeg for best hay, and often less, this season a firm of dealers were sending round and buying up every scrap they could get. In this way they came and readily gave us £2 per ton, for about forty tons, or as much more as we could spare. Considering the Canadian ton is but *twenty* 100 lbs., or 2000 lbs. as against the English 2240 lbs., this must be deemed a very high figure; the more when it is remembered the cost of the hay to the settler is but the *cutting*, the prairie being, to a great extent, at present public property. As to the hay itself, if well made, it is beautifully sweet, and full of nourishment, but is wholly unfermented. There is a very brisk demand for hay, too, by the contractors of the different sections of the Canada Pacific Rail-

way, on some of which large numbers of horses are employed even during the winter season. They require the hay pressed into tight bales, and bound with wire, for which a machine is employed, and give as high as £3 and £4 a ton for hay so treated. With regard to railway work, during winter it is necessary to suspend all operations where mere earthwork is concerned; the frost is far too rigorous to admit of labour of that kind. But for cuttings through rock, of which there is a considerable amount in some of the sections, winter is the best time; and it is well it is so, else large numbers of able-bodied men would be out of employ at the very period when they most need it to maintain themselves.

In Lower Canada, lumbering, as it is termed, finds employment for farm hands during the winter; but in Manitoba there is comparatively little wood and no such resource. Hence railway work is mostly sought after by the unemployed; but what it will be when this railroad is completed is another question. It seems probable, however, that for years to come the development of the country will supply ever-fresh resources in this direction. We are indeed promised a line to pass almost close to our own doors, and to be complete for a distance of fifty miles by next fall (see Supplemental Note)—the South-western Railway from Winnipeg to the coal-fields in the district of the Souris River, and to numerous townships in that direction. The acquisition of coal must always be a very important matter with the Winnipegers, with whom it is at present as high as £3 per ton brought in from the States, and wood is from £1, 10s. to £2 per cord—about fifteen hundredweight. In a climate so rigorous as Manitoba during winter, *cheap fuel* is a primary necessity, for the cost of firing in the town is an item of very serious dimensions.

Unfortunately, in my observation of Canadians, they take a long time to make a start—they have impressed me as a people more of talk than of action; and hence as peculiarly unsuited, in a pioneer country like this, for the form of government they now enjoy—*self-government*. An

energetic governor, with full powers, and responsible only to the Dominion parliament at Ottawa, would be a grand thing indeed for the future of this province. Among such a number of mixed races—Canadians, Americans, English, Scotch, Irish, French, Mennonites, Icelanders, French and British half-breeds, and these last the most numerous—how can there be any sufficient unity of purpose to secure the sort of administration essential to the rapid development of such a country as this? It is impossible that the natives can for one moment assent to be taxed for improvements which, while indispensable to men accustomed to the conveniences of civilisation, can have but slight attractions for those whose associations are still clinging to the wild Indian and the buffalo. With such an incongruity in the elements, how *could* vigorous action be expected? The only hope seems in the future, when the country shall have become sufficiently settled to make the present majority a helpless minority; but this will take a number of years yet.

The short 'Indian summer' was over by 6th November, by which date the ice began to collect and run down in large masses on the river, making crossing and re-crossing precarious. Ferries are empowered to charge double fares from 1st November on this account. Having occasion to go up to town on the 9th, I crossed the ferry without much difficulty by the scow at the mouth of the river at Fort Garry (Winnipeg); but returning by the opposite side, and being late, I found to my consternation that the ferry rope at St Charles's was gone, and myself cut off from home. I shouted vigorously for the ferryman, but for a long while neither a sound was to be heard, nor a light seen; and in despair I was casting about as to what was to be done, on a cold wintry night—the icicles hanging in profusion from my moustaches—cut off from *dulce domum*, and not knowing where to get a bed nearer than by returning to Winnipeg, a distance of eight miles, when I was relieved by a shout: 'Are you afoot?' I was rejoiced to reply that I was. 'Hold on, then; I'll fetch you,' was better still. In a few

seconds a canoe was descried threading its way through the surging masses of ice, as they were pressed on by the current towards the point of stoppage—the mouth of the river—from which they gradually fill up till the whole forms one solid mass. I was indeed thankful to be landed once more on my own side of the river. A few days later it was a mass of solid ice over which wagons and teams crossed from side to side with the most perfect safety. The 15th November is the average date on which this event first occurs.

We were now fairly launched on the winter season; I kept a good thermometer outside each night for the purpose of gauging the degree of cold; and by the 11th inst. we had the first experience of an atmosphere at zero at 7 A.M. On the 22d the thermometer marked 20° below zero at sunrise—a condition of things far from pleasant. One felt the cold was not to be trifled with; one's nose and ears especially demanded protection. Hands are kept pretty warm by what are termed 'mittens,' large leather gloves without fingers, like a hedger's at home, and lined with 'duffel' or felt; and for the feet, 'moccasins,' a loose limp boot of untanned leather, moose, or buffalo-hide, without any stiff sole, under which two pairs of woollen socks and a casing of 'duffel' are also worn. Though I never exceeded one pair of socks, I rarely experienced cold feet. The old saying ascribed to the knight of the last—'there is nothing like leather'—is a great truism out here. Leather is the only effective preservative against the searching blasts of the constantly raging winds of this Prairie Province. In fact, the cold winds are *the* enemies against which one has chiefly to fortify, and nothing but leather can protect from their penetrating power. Hence leather coats, trousers, and boots, and fur hats, are the usual casing, with the universal buffalo greatcoat to cover all; making a man look more like a huge brown bear than anything human. But every kind of fur and skin is in use, while huge robes of furs are thrown around the traveller to protect him when driving out.

The sense of cold is certainly much less here than in England; its dryness probably accounts for much of this; but cold and heat are relative terms as regards the feelings. Thus, while on the 22d November the thermometer was at  $20^{\circ}$  below zero; on the 25th, three days afterwards, it stood, at same time and place,  $20^{\circ}$  above zero; and though involving  $12^{\circ}$  of frost, the weather felt quite warm, and both gloves and overcoats seemed superfluous. A decided characteristic of the climate of Manitoba is its fickleness. England is justly esteemed a variable climate, but is far less so than Manitoba. No two days are alike; and I never was in any country where you can with so little accuracy forecast the morrow's weather. The variations of temperature are, as sudden as they often are formidable. Here was a variation of  $40^{\circ}$  in two or three days' interval only, but it sometimes will equally occur in twenty-four hours.

No snow to any extent fell until the 4th December, when it snowed all day, as it had also done part of the previous night; but even then, six inches was the utmost that fell, hardly sufficient for sleighing, and yet too much for the further use of wheels; so that from this date the sleighing season took its beginning. Sleighs are of various kinds, but the most ordinary are the 'cutter,' a sort of gig on runners for one or two horses or ponies; and the 'bob' sleigh—double runners for heavy draught, as a wagon-box or hay-rack. It is claimed for the sleigh that it will carry half as much again as a wheeled vehicle of similar proportions; and on a well-worn snow track this is true. But they go heavily on fresh snow, and with a heavy load are difficult to start off, with the absurd method here adopted of hooking the horses to whiffle-trees, or splinter bars, revolving on a pin, instead of to a trace bar, as in England. Unless both horses act exactly together in a start, the effort is lost, and this is a very frequent cause of irritation and delay.

## CHAPTER X.

Laying in meat for winter—Amateur butchering—The river as a high-road—Snowfall—Christmas cheer in Manitoba—The temperature—Suitable clothing—The farmer's winter occupations—Buying more horses.

NOVEMBER is the great month of animal slaughter for winter store. Every farmer or settler of any importance has his store of fat beasts for domestic use at this season, in numbers corresponding to his necessities. Some will kill as many as three or four bullocks, five or six pigs, and so on—sheep, too, if they have any; but these are generally scarce, and possessed for the most part only by the butchers in Winnipeg, who get them up from the States. Our recent fire had of course precluded our having much stock, and, indeed, new arrivals like ourselves rarely have any. We had, however, brought forward a pair of very nice porkers, purchased when about a month old in the end of July, for about eight shillings (two dollars) each, and these, with milk, barley, and potatoes, had by this date become very respectably sized pigs, and a valuable contribution to our winter supply; for while home-fed pork is delicious, one eschews as poison all other, the feeding of which there is no security for. On a favourable day these pigs had to die.

In Manitoba—except in the near neighbourhood of a town—what a settler wants done, he must do for himself, or confess his incapacity, and solicit the aid of some neighbour more enterprising, though not necessarily very skilful, to do it for him. It has been said, 'Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.' Be this as it may, enterprise is the life of a settler, and one was indisposed to admit incapacity for the discharge of any practical duty to those around. So, though neither myself nor boys had attempted anything of the kind before, yet, having sent on the previous year some fifty pigs to the London market from our place in Devonshire, we had seen sufficient of the details of the operation to give confidence

in undertaking a task, it must be confessed, by no means an inviting one. So we went to work, and though it was a first attempt, in the result the pigs would not have disgraced the London or any other market, and as a matter of fact, were turned out of hand far better than some we had seen elsewhere. About 250 pounds of first-class dairy pork, scarcely to be purchased for money hereabouts, were thus secured for our sustenance. I was content this first season to purchase beef; and hearing a neighbour was killing an unusually good heifer, bespoke the half of it, which weighed 320 pounds dressed weight; and thus our larder was replete for the season with nearly 600 pounds of prime meat, to be supplemented with poultry and fish—both cheap and plentiful in town during winter—as occasion required.

For the reception of this store of food, it was necessary to ~~run~~ up a small house, and this was done; but there is no fear as to its keeping fresh enough wherever it was placed. The frost freezes everything so hard, the difficulty is to deal with it at all, the meat itself being harder to cut through than the bone. This is, however, met by hanging the part to be cut from, near the kitchen fire over night. Game in the winter is not as abundant as we hoped. After the ducks left, about the middle of November, the shooting season seemed practically over. Prairie fowl and partridges (so called, but really pheasants) and rabbits exist; but they are either so wild or so scarce, none of our party could ever manage to bag any—though occasionally, when without a gun, they would see numbers of them.

A curious feature of the winter season is the fact that the river—a source of so much inconvenience half the year to the dwellers on its southern bank like ourselves—becomes, when frozen over, the great highway for all travellers east or west; and a capital road it is, level and smooth. The ice on it is of no value for skating. It becomes too thoroughly buried in snow for this. Covered rinks do exist in Winnipeg, and these attract numbers to participate in this health-invigorating



exercise. It was singular, however, in a country where one especially looked to see unlimited skating, and other exercises dependent on ice, to find it entirely absent in the open air; for not a vestige of ice exists—nothing but snow, though this for months only to a very trifling depth. All around Winnipeg, the black earth of the plain on which it stood was distinctly visible, the wind having driven the light snow away to drifts of considerable depth here and there; and the roadway, wherever much traffic existed, was earth, ice, and snow reduced to a fine powdery mixture, and very obstructive to good sleighing. The amount of snowfall these first three months of winter appears to have been unusually small—probably the result of the very excessive amount of rain that fell during the autumn; for snow is but frozen rain, and a dry time was only to be expected after months of incessant downfall. The thin covering of snow has a very marked effect on the penetration of the frost into the soil. When this is but lightly covered, as this season, the frost gets down to a wonderful depth into the solid earth. It takes long in the spring before the heat of the sun can penetrate thus far. Agricultural operations are not, however, stayed thereby—a sufficient depth is soon thawed for the plough and the seed harrows, after the snow disappears; the deeper frost, as has been observed, remains as a store of congealed moisture nourishing the growth of vegetation during the summer heat.

The season of Christmas is usually well honoured among all English-speaking communities. Manitoba forms no exception. Every effort was made in Winnipeg to do honour to the occasion in the manner usual at home. All shops were more or less replete with articles suitable for presents, and it was stated in a local paper that such a business had never before been done in the town. The grocers' shops, and the meat and poultry market—especially the latter—were particularly well supplied. Every description of bird and beast, and of many, if not all, kinds of fish suitable for food, was here well represented. Bears (excellent meat), deer, as well as the accustomed beef,

mutton, and pork, were in good supply; while turkeys, geese, fowls, and game were simply without limit; much of which comes up from the States. Their frozen condition, of course, much detracts from their appearance, but we all agreed we had never eaten a better turkey and sausages than we bought in the market for a dollar (4s.); the bird being about ten pounds in weight, very meaty and tender, and it was amply supplemented by the time-honoured additions of the richest of plum-puddings and the conventional mince-pies.

We shall, however, long remember the day before Christmas, when some of our party drove up in the sleigh to see the markets, as the coldest we had ever experienced. Driving home between six and seven in the evening, it seemed too cold almost to survive it. My nose and cheeks were frozen on two different occasions during the day, leaving very sore evidences thereof for some while afterwards; and it was imperative every now and then to get down and run alongside for a considerable distance to maintain circulation at all. This was, of course, in driving, and facing the wind, which was north-west—the usual quarter—and right in front. To those sitting, or rather reclining, behind, with back to horses, it was, of course, much more bearable. The thermometer that night marked  $38^{\circ}$  below zero, and was as low as  $45^{\circ}$  in Winnipeg! a cold that in England may probably be thought altogether exaggerated, did not the masses of ice that at such times incrust one's beard and face bear too eloquent testimony to the reality of a temperature never dreamed of in the coldest spot in the United Kingdom. The thermometer has marked *zero* on an inside wooden partition wall of the bedroom my wife and myself have slept in when I have risen of a morning! Yet we had not suffered from the cold; nor, as a rule, do people find the cold half as bad as it would be supposed. Its dryness is its great advantage; were it damp, nothing human could stand before it. Of course, it becomes, under any circumstances, a question of more or less clothing; coats of skins—the dress of primitive man—best meeting the

necessities of the case. For these, bears, beavers, wolves, raccoons, skunks, and every variety of furred animal, are freely drawn upon; but especially and chiefly the buffalo supplies his hide for the comfort of those who have now nearly exterminated him from those prairie wilds where but lately he was wont to reign supreme in herds of countless thousands.

There is but little the farmer can do throughout the winter months—many in fact, who keep no stock, shut up their farms until the spring, and come into town. Those who have teams of horses find it indispensable to obtain work of some kind for them, both to keep them in health and exercise, and also because here, as at home, the keep of horses doing nothing is expensive. The railway provides work for a large number of such unemployed teams—paying two and a half dollars (10s.) per diem, and finding rations and quarters for the drivers, and hay and corn for the horses; but the work is at a considerable distance off. The hauling of hay and wood to town, hereabouts forms the more general occupation. Having taken a contract to supply a firm in Winnipeg with some forty tons and upwards of the former before 1st March, we found from the first ample work for our horses. In fact, by the beginning of the year, it became too evident a single team would be unable to get that amount up by the date fixed; and it was necessary to purchase a second team; the more so, as their acquisition would be indispensable, on first appearance of spring, to till the ground for getting in, as we hoped, from fifty to a hundred acres of corn. Horses, too, are supposed to be cheaper to buy during the winter season; but this did not seem verified in our experience, as we met with some difficulty in suiting our requirements, the demand, just then, being pretty brisk; but finally bought the last pair of a batch from a dealer who was anxious to return to his home in Ontario at once. They were a contrast to our first team, though the same in colour—black or brown and bay; but these being nearly sixteen and a half hands high, made the former at fifteen hands look like ponies.

Horses, and of a superior description, must be both plentiful

and cheap in Ontario. Manitoba is wholly supplied therefrom, and notwithstanding the risks and expense of transport, a profitable trade is done; and yet the price of eighty guineas the pair is rarely, if ever, exceeded; and sixty guineas will be about the average. One of the animals now purchased would have readily commanded that sum in any English market—a well-shaped five-year-old horse, with fine action and without a blemish, an animal fit for any purpose, and of good temper and manners. The other was a very powerful horse, fit for any omnibus or van; he was out of mark, but perfectly fresh; and I purchased the pair under warranty, for something under the sixty pounds. Horses do well in the cold; and an animal we could get little flesh on during the summer, got comparatively fat in his work during the winter. Yet one wonders at it. They come home at night after a journey with their long winter coats full of sweat, which too often turns to frost and ice; and it is impossible to get them dry, though we clothed them up. So intense is the frost at times, that four horses in a stable none too large for them, did not sensibly raise the temperature; and horses, stable, and all would of a morning appear covered with frost, the stable looking like a stalactite cavern! Clipping, though practised to a small extent in Winnipeg, would hardly do unless horses were kept very warm. Still, whether in this country or at home, fast work for animals wearing their natural coats is very unsatisfactory. It would be impossible for horses taking loads to Winnipeg—a distance of nearly twelve miles—to return otherwise than at a trot; so that the difficulty out here is hard to obviate. No English agricultural horses, however, could do the work of drawing often twenty-five to thirty hundred-weights of hay twelve miles to town, three days in a week, returning each time at six to seven miles per hour. Our horses retained their condition on this work continued for weeks—nay, months—together. Horses must be well bred for work of this kind.

## CHAPTER XI.

Social intercourse—New-year's day—'Surprise parties'—The Local Parliament—Healthiness, and lack of sanitary precautions—Severe cold of January—Heavy snowfall—Storage of ice.

CONSIDERABLE interchange of neighbourly hospitality—not to mention more extended social gatherings—prevails during the winter season; and in Winnipeg they have their balls and parties, private and subscription, masquerade, and fancy dress, as in any resort of fashion in England. We did not, however, come out to Canada—we seniors at anyrate—for social purposes, but for the more active business of life; and therefore did not enter into these matters so readily as those who come to make the country their home might do. But there exists a considerable amount of social feeling, and those whose habits are gregarious need have no fear but that, if themselves agreeable, they may obtain a good share of neighbourly intercourse.

New-year's day seems particularly devoted to visiting; and in Winnipeg, the governor of the Province holds a levée on that day, which is attended by a large number of visitors, of what, in England, would be termed 'rather a mixture;' but the externals of a court must be maintained, and 'high life' is not quite so exclusive in these northerly regions as in the Old World.

A form of visiting and of 'social gatherings' which seems to come in with the new year is what is termed a 'surprise party.' A number of neighbours (neighbour has rather a comprehensive application in Manitoba) agree to meet together on a given evening, and make a descent upon the quarters of some other neighbour who has been kept ignorant of the conspiracy. Such at least is the *theory* of the matter; in practice, it may be doubted if the secret is so closely kept that the visitant has not first got a hint of what is coming. The subject selected is usually one who has a pretty roomy house, and who, it is known beforehand, will be both able and willing to receive

such a number of impromptu guests. In the train a fiddler is usually brought, and also an ample stock of eatables to supplement the larder of the host so unexpectedly put to the test; and these extemporised reunions are sometimes kept up to three and four o'clock of the morning. The institution, however, is not indigenous, but an importation from Lower Canada.

In the neighbourhood where we resided there were a few families, both English and Canadian, of good connections, some of them descendants or relations of well-known naval and military officers, &c. This made the society more agreeable; for though no man of education and refinement, no matter what his occupation, is objected to, neither our neighbours nor ourselves were agreeable to mix on social terms with the insufferable roughness that characterises so markedly many in Canada who, wanting these elementary indications of good breeding, nevertheless assume the most perfect equality, and do not hesitate to intrude themselves on any occasion that offers. In fact, this familiarity is what shocks the sense of those who have been accustomed to the more reserved proprieties of European society. One meets it continually—a species of fraternity that, theoretically, may appear very desirable, but, in practice, is very much the reverse.

In Winnipeg it is stated that a good deal of social caste prevails. If so, it must be on the basis mentioned—namely, that ‘manners make the man;’ for it cannot be denied that men of the best social antecedents are there in very subordinate positions; while some, though not all, of the wealthy are, considering the source of their wealth, far from desirable acquaintances.

There is considerable outward display among the moneyed classes of the capital. The sleighs and cutters covered with handsome and costly trappings of furs and cloth, sufficiently attest this throughout the winter season; but such a community must ever present contrasts of the most striking character. Here, parties robed in the richest furs; there, the most scanty

attire. Here people clothed almost like Esquimaux ; within a few yards, others garbed in the conventional chimney-pot hat and suit of ordinary walking clothes ! These latter, however, are not very numerous, for the general necessity of protecting the ears, as of all parts the most readily affected by the frost, renders a warmer and more comprehensive covering for the head absolutely necessary. Hence fur head-dresses—not unlike the military busby—are in general wear ; but fashion in dress is by no means exclusive in Winnipeg.

On the 16th December the local parliament was opened with an amount of pomp and circumstance, as I was informed, quite remarkable. I did not attend it, though in town on that day. I wish to speak respectfully of all systems of government, but confess it is difficult to treat, in a country like this, a parliament, and system of parliamentary representation, with becoming deference. Parliamentary institutions do well enough for countries of settled and matured political foundations. In a young province like this, energetic government seems to me indispensable, and this is quite impossible with representative institutions. The whole condition of the country—its wretched roads, bridges, and other elementary indications of civilisation so conspicuous by their absence—most completely attests the unsuitableness of a local parliament in Manitoba. Yet it exists ; and once established, how can it be done away with ? Its existence must be a serious hindrance to the rapid development of the country.

The province of Manitoba has been declared to be, and at present undoubtedly is, healthy. This must be due to a very considerable extent to the purifying influences of its dry and cold winters. It owes little to any measures of hygiene instituted by the government, whether in town or country. In fact, the first thought that naturally occurs to a casual observer is : How can pestilence be long averted with such an absence of every sanitary precaution ? In Winnipeg this is alarmingly apparent. There seems to be no efficient health conservancy of any kind. There are no doubt *laws* ; but they can never

be enforced, as one may see egg-shells, rinds of squeezed lemons, and every other kind of refuse, freely cast forth into the public streets in broad daylight, and no attempt at removal, or effective steps taken to punish such violations of the law. In the winter the accumulation of every kind of refuse is astonishing, there being no means of carrying off deposits of any kind; drainage is impossible. In like manner, except beneath the snow, and this only in drifts, there is no burying or disposing of anything, however obnoxious. Healthy though the country has hitherto been, there are not wanting unmistakable indications that the neglect of sanitary precautions will not long be with impunity. Throat affections are very common all over Canada—diphtheria being particularly prevalent, and having made its appearance in Winnipeg this winter (1880). Nor are scarlet and typhoid fevers unknown; and it is needful that the local authorities bestir themselves, or some or all of these diseases will become endemic.

January 1881 was a month of extreme cold. December had been a very severe month, the thermometer considerably below the average; but the temperature of January was far lower, the mean of the month of thirty-one days being a fraction over  $16^{\circ}$  below zero, or  $48^{\circ}$  of frost. The lowest reading being  $40^{\circ}$  below on 15th, the highest  $18^{\circ}$  above on 19th, these readings being taken *at sunrise only*. But during the day of the last-named date, the thermometer went up to just the freezing-point, or  $32^{\circ}$ , when the contrast was so marked that indoors one felt quite oppressed, and we were glad to keep the doors open awhile! The thermometer is, however, very misleading as an index to the cold, so far as the sense of it extends, as  $10^{\circ}$  below zero with a high wind will be infinitely less bearable than  $30^{\circ}$  below zero if the weather be perfectly calm and clear.

January, although very cold, was an exceedingly fine month—bright, clear, and generally calm; at least marked by only one day of high wind, such as makes the winter here too often so unbearable—the prevalence of 'blizzards'—blinding hurricanes of wind and snow that nothing can face, and which



become dangerous to human life, unless a place of refuge is promptly secured. The month was very unusually marked by the absence of even one of these storms, but kept cold to the last; the thermometer on 31st registering  $38^{\circ}$  below zero, a point reached only on two previous occasions during the winter—Christmas morning, and 15th January—when it attained  $40^{\circ}$  below zero.

February opened with a light fall of snow, which was much increased on the 2d of the month, when all roads and tracks became obliterated; but the temperature rose sensibly. In fact, as a rule, the thermometer always rises with wind, and falls with calm; so that, as before observed, its readings are a very uncertain guide to one's sensibility of the cold.

As the winter hitherto had been extremely deficient in snow-fall, sleighing was much impeded on the high-roads, and it seemed as if wheels must be resumed once more. But nature was now about to compensate us for her deficiencies; it scarcely ceased snowing during the first two weeks of this month, and locomotion was almost brought to a stand-still. About thirty-six inches fell in seven days, the heaviest fall *at one time* ever recorded in the Province. The depth of snow on the river and highways was from two to four feet, and far deeper still in drifts. We made an effort to send two loads of hay to Winnipeg on the 7th, but it took seven hours to do the eleven miles; and in returning, one of the horses was attacked with colic, and might have perished had he not very fortunately been near home at the time.

This break was improved to cut out large blocks of ice from the river, to be stored away for summer use—a luxury at that season very kindred to a necessary. Huge cubes of from one to two feet thick are hewn out of the river by means of an axe. The operation at first seemed a difficult one; but our boys, taking stock of a neighbour's *modus operandi*, soon became expert at the business, and got out several tons of this blue transparent crystal from a river that, when in flow, is as thick and mud-coloured as it can well be. This is one, however,

of the advantages of living near a river, although for general convenience we were located on the wrong side of ours.

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## CHAPTER XII.

The syndicate and the Canadian Pacific Railway—Political parties—The 'national policy'—Oppressive incidents of its taxation—Early indications of spring—Visit of the assessor, and local taxation—Materials for house-building—Design for additions to our domicile, but without competition.

DURING the month of February (1881) the famous 'syndicate' contract for the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway (C.P.R., as it is usually termed) was concluded, passing both Houses of the Legislature, and receiving the final ratification of the Governor-general. In the Commons it met with a keen and persistent hostility on the part of the opposition, animated, it is to be feared, more by party jealousy of the success of a measure that has been taken in hand by both sections of the House alike when in office, than by any earnest patriotism; although it cannot be denied that the terms of the contract do seem to place an almost unlimited control of the entire railway system of the country in the hands of a single corporation, thereby creating a monopoly dangerous in the highest degree to the best interests of the country. This, however, the government stoutly affirm they have fully provided against. It remains for the future to decide this.

A most important step towards the development of this immense country (Manitoba and the North-west) has undoubtedly been thus taken. Settlers will, in a year or two, find a railway conveying them to the most remote parts; and, of course, opening up fresh lands to cultivation, and creating fresh markets for producers. There is now, obviously, a great future before the country *with good administration*. At present, the Conservative element in politics seems greatly in

the ascendant throughout the Dominion; and the triumphant success of this measure (quite a party victory) gives great satisfaction, and will add increasing supporters to the party in power, should it work well. But there exists, nevertheless, especially in the towns, a numerous and demonstrative body of Radicals, here termed 'Grits;' and this keen party rivalry is by no means a promising element in a young country demanding, at all times, the fullest exercise of patriotism in combined action for the general good. There can never be any analogy, politically considered, between an old country and a new one. They stand on entirely different platforms. And indeed, in all countries, political asperities are ever a source of weakness.

The Conservative party in Canada is supposed to owe its strength mainly to its determined adoption of what is termed the 'national policy' of protection; while the 'Grit' programme favours free-trade. I think few Englishmen coming out here, whatever their political views at home, can fail to denounce, as political dishonesty of a grievous character, the policy of a people that, while mainly dependent for their prosperity on the free-trade tariffs of the mother-country, cruelly tax every export of that country and its subjects that comes to their shores! It is a very serious grievance, and one that falls at times with peculiar hardship on individuals. It did so especially upon us, who, so soon after our arrival, having all our winter clothing destroyed by fire, required its immediate replacement from home. And although most of the clothing thus sent out had been in use, and was admitted as such, it was yet taxed by duties of thirty and thirty-five per cent. on a valuation much exaggerated. But, although I made a representation of the circumstances to the chief of the customs department, it was of no avail. It is really quite amusing to observe the enthusiasm with which Conservatives here cling to this policy of protection, as if it were heaven-born—dubbing the promoters of it as 'our great statesmen!' What singular views are current on the subject may be inferred from the following

extraordinary statements in a long letter to the editor of the leading Winnipeg journal :

‘If Canada has been foolish in the past, the mother-country (England) has been idiotic in comparison. A member of parliament (Mr Mundella), speaking in the House of Commons about the trichina in American hog products, said : “England paid the United States nine million pounds a year for hog meats, and it would never do to interfere with the trade, as it must injure the poor in England.”

‘Many years ago, before the free-trade era, England paid Ireland a large sum yearly for hog products, and Ireland prospered because she had something to sell. England changed her fiscal policy to free-trade, and still Ireland kept on for some years selling her hog products, and prospered. But in the meantime England had been giving the United States a free market, or, in other words, indirectly protecting American productions to the ruin of her own. The Americans gradually but rapidly, under this English protection, drove Irish products out of the market, and to-day they (the Americans) enjoy this immense trade indirectly protected by England, to the detriment of colonial productions, and Ireland is left to starve.

‘Is it any wonder under these circumstances that the Americans prosper, and the Irish in Ireland go to ruin? The so-called free-trade policy of England having now accomplished the ruin of every home industry, retarded the progress of her colonies, and enriched every foreign country, is now going to do more ; it will set the British workmen against the moneyed classes, and may lead to civil war, which will not only dismember the empire, but tear it to pieces.

‘If this nine million pounds a year was now being paid to Ireland and the British colonies, instead of to foreign countries, would there be any discontent in Ireland, or elsewhere in the British Empire? Common sense would answer “No.” What right has England to indirectly protect the industries of foreign nations, and ruin her own and her people by so doing?

‘The Irish agitators are not taking a proper course ; no permanent good can come of what they are now trying to do. True Irishmen—in fact, every British workman throughout the whole empire—ought to say to England’s parliamentary representatives : “Do for our country in the future what you have indirectly done for

the United States in the past ; protect our industries." This is how the English working classes are being injured, and driven from the land of their birth to seek employment in foreign protected countries. Rebellion and bloodshed will be the end of it, if this illusory free-trade nonsense is not stopped. It is not free-trade at all, but a false blinding policy to undermine, and ultimately ruin, the legitimate commerce of the whole British Empire.

A BRITISH SUBJECT.'

Now, remembering that it was not twelve months since I had been present in England during one of the most outspoken popular elections that ever took place there ; and bearing in mind also that no member of the Conservative party dared to hint at the smallest return to protection, even in the interests of the much-suffering agricultural classes, I felt, as I read this indictment, that I must have been in a dream, and Rip Van Winkle-like, have passed not one, but twenty years since that event. I was amazed to read that 'rebellion and bloodshed with civil-war' were imminent, *because England's parliamentary representatives were disregarding the voice of the people*, and were driving them 'from the land of their birth,' and that the country had fully lapsed into that despotic 'Imperialism' which was by some affected to be so much dreaded under the last parliament ! I therefore wrote the following reply to this letter to the editor, whom I knew personally, with a courteous request, that though I knew my views ran counter to his own on the subject, he would have the justice to publish an opposite view :

'SIR—Your correspondent, 'A British Subject,' dating from Chicago, seems incapable of understanding that the cardinal principle of free-trade as practised by England is, "The greatest good for the greatest number." This is a sound principle, consumers being at all times numerically greatly in excess of producers. If Ireland could produce nine million pounds worth of hog meats, she is so much nearer to England than the States, she would find a ready market for them. She cannot. In the interests of 'British workmen' chiefly, they are imported from any countries that can, be they Ireland, Canada, or any other. Why, in the name of justice, should they be taxed for this country or Ireland ?

‘As for the “English working classes being injured, and driven from the land of their birth to seek employment in foreign protected countries,” by free-trade, it is a statement so absurdly contrary to fact as to need no refutation. The agricultural classes have been so to some extent, no doubt. It was inevitable for the good of the many. The ‘working classes’ in England are the very ones who would not endure a return to protection in any form. To attempt it would create a revolution! I do not purpose to discuss the question of Protection *v.* Free-Trade in the abstract with your correspondent, who, though ‘a British Subject,’ I should conceive, by his ignorance of facts, can never have been outside the American continent. But, at least, I choose to enter my protest against his views in the name of an Englishman, a staunch Conservative at home, and

ANOTHER BRITISH SUBJECT.

‘P.S.—The only “English working classes” who are “driven from the land of their birth,” are the victims of, or sent out by, the Trades’ Unions; but these are institutions that, while demanding free-trade to the fullest extent in their own interests, practise protection against all others, a policy very kindred to what in this country is termed “the national policy!”’

Canadians will find out in time that an unsound policy, however presently convenient, will in the end have to be changed.


The taxes on everything here, seeing that much necessarily comes from the States and England—added to heavy land-freight charges, make most things dreadfully dear; and this is a condition of things that the settler comes in contact with directly he arrives.

Free-trade with her colonies universally, should be an imperative, as it is a most natural condition of alliance with the mother-country. If the Dominion desires protection against the States—the alleged occasion of this policy—let them have it; and if there is a desire to foster young industries, let them be subsidised. Where there is genuine demand, trade is sure to thrive. The policy of a mother and her children should be identical. Of all taxation, that which touches the *necessaries of life* seems always the most grievous, as it raises the cost of —production to consumers universally.

The month of February (1881) began in snow, and went out in a snow-storm. Such an amount of snow as fell during the whole period had never before been registered since an official meteorological record had been established in the Province. Still we had nothing compared with the snowfall in Minnesota, and indeed throughout the North American continent generally. Locomotion was entirely suspended; and as far south as Prince Edward's Island, it was stated that a person standing on a snow-drift could touch the insulators on the telegraph poles!

The opening of March afforded us a very sensible, and much longed for, indication that winter was coming to an end, and spring approaching. The nights were still cold, the thermometer at sunrise being still frequently below zero; but the sun was hot by day, and the mercury at last rose above the freezing-point. But though this change of temperature was pleasing, the accompaniment of a sloppy and muddy condition of the ground by day from melting snow, was far from agreeable.

Another unmistakable evidence of Spring's approach, too, was the commencement of the egg season. Eggs enter so largely into domestic economy, that the difference between an ample supply and none at all is something more than appreciable. As a rule, fowls lay well with us, and with little trouble. Our poultry, for warmth, were kept in the stable. Little or no extra trouble was bestowed on them; they rarely went outside when frost was severe, but no restriction was imposed; they were fed on whole barley, with occasional scraps from the house, and had no other liquid than snow. They began laying, March 3d—three weeks earlier than any of our neighbours'; and during this month, from only six or eight young birds, we had considerably over a hundred eggs. A litter of seven young pigs was born too, about the same time, which did well, and came in most acceptably to supply us with fresh dairy pork during the summer. Towards the end of the month we had our first visitation of the tax collector, or rather of his *avant courier*—the assessor—who comes at that season to take stock of all that you have or are—even to your age and faith! People in England



are so wont to imagine that theirs is the country of heavy taxation, and that in the States and Canada these things are escaped, that it is well for them to be reminded that there is no escape for them either in the one place or the other. In Manitoba, your land, house, horses, oxen, cows, sheep, pigs, implements of husbandry—all are assessed and taxed.

Well, I am not of the number of those who expect to live in a civilised country, enjoying its conveniences, without contributing towards the expenses of good government. But, I confess, one does rebel against having to pay without receiving any such advantages; and although one must hope for some returns in the future, it is too obvious that, whoever paid taxes in this municipality last year, received little or nothing in return for them.

As for the roads, there might almost as well be none; and except that a fair parochial school exists within two or three miles, one would be every whit as well off in other respects if one took up a homestead in the centre of Dartmoor, or on some of the wild uplands of Scotland. There is a church about three miles from us; but this is in no way sustained by municipal taxation. There is a small endowment on the part of the Church Missionary Society, which is supplemented by the old system of pew-rents; while an offertory is employed for incidental expenses, but the living is a poor one.

So far, then, taxation here literally provides next to nothing, which is the worst of all taxation; and when one considers how the 'national policy' of a heavy tariff on all imports really taxes every one and everything but the producer and his products—though he does not escape but in his own line of business—setting the real benefits derived from taxation aside, *it is a truth that taxation is practically lighter in England than out here!*

The assessment itself was, however, moderate: the land, for instance, was assessed at considerably less than it cost me; so were our horses. We had only a few days before purchased a yoke of oxen, just to break up a few acres more prairie land.



this spring ; and they at once came in for assessment. They were valued at a hundred dollars, the two teams of horses at four hundred dollars, and so on ; the whole valuation amounting to about five hundred pounds, which was pretty reasonable, as I should be very sorry to be compelled to accept that sum for the property it represented.

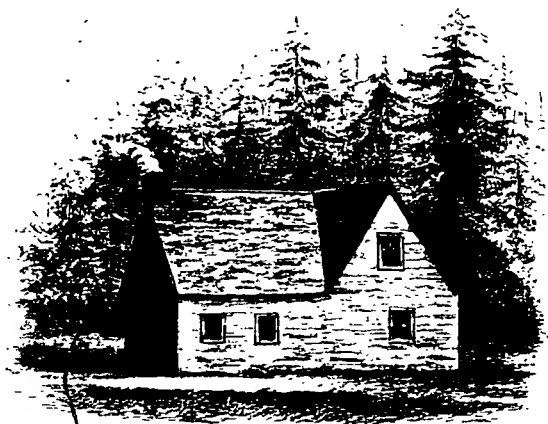
I purchased about this time, from a party leaving the neighbourhood, a quantity of logs for making an addition to our house. They had been got together by the vendor for the same purpose for himself, but, having sold his property, he was going further west, and offered them as a bargain. These logs are the material almost universally in use at the present time *in the country* for building purposes, as the use of bricks extends, as yet, little beyond Winnipeg—it being difficult to obtain a sufficient supply even there for the demand. But it would tax the genius of a Sir Christopher Wren to do much in the way of artistic design with such primitive materials. ‘Given logs of wood, sixteen feet long and one foot square, to construct a house that shall exhibit the best architectural ability’—might well be made the subject for a prize competition, and I shall propose it for the next Industrial Exhibition.

The mode of building is to fit one end of a log into the transverse at a corner, by a dovetail (see figure), raising one upon another until the required height is attained. The logs being all previously cut and squared, usually fit pretty closely together ; but any crevices are filled in with plaster, and the outside is then either plastered all over and whitewashed, or weather-boarded and painted ; or left to the normal colour of the wood—but this looks very bad. Inside too, the walls can be either simply plastered, whitewashed, or papered ; or more effectually coated first with tar paper, which completely excludes the air, and then lathed and plastered.

Our ambition extended merely to adding a good-sized kitchen, fifteen by twenty feet, and a bedroom of like dimensions overhead. This gives ample room, and constitutes a fair-



sized house. Design one can do little in ; the conditions, both of material and of the existing building, forbid it ; yet the result is much as here shown ; while, by growing a vine over the southern wall, and giving a porch to the kitchen entrance, and another, on the west side, for the house door, we hope our dwelling will



assume a somewhat more civilised exterior than, during the winter, it has presented. The difficulty of labour I was fortunate enough to surmount by commencing earlier than was intended ; securing thereby the services of a French half-breed carpenter—a very decent sort of fellow—and his two assistants, at one guinea a day including their board.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

Misleading information—Real advantages for settlers—Indispensable qualifications for success—Drawbacks—Opening for young men of education working in association—Married men—Hardships in a wife's position—English communities in the province—Capital.

ONE cannot fail to be impressed with the amount of misleading information circulated concerning this Province. There seems

to be a sort of league somewhere to throw dust in people's eyes. For example, the statement that appeared so widely last summer (1880) in the home papers, to the effect that the streets of Winnipeg swarmed with frogs, so that no one could walk about without crushing them, &c. ! was the veriest flight of fancy ever published : as true of London, or Edinburgh, as of Winnipeg. Or again, in a local paper, that there had just been a 'ploughing match' at Emerson—which would be as practicable as one in Piccadilly ! But, of course, it would be circulated, and might reach England unquestioned. But statements which are directed immediately to influence and attract settlers seem of all the most mischievous. For instance, I saw it stated in a leading English periodical, that a farmer may reach Winnipeg from Liverpool in fifteen days for from £9 to £28. 'He can at once procure his location, and if he arrives early enough in the year, he may raise a crop' (wheat or oats, it is presumed) 'the first season !'

A man may unquestionably do very many things in life, under exceptional circumstances, that not one in a thousand ever does do. But is this a *fair* way of putting things ? It will be seen that *we* took twenty-two days. It is true we stopped a day or two *en route* ; but so does the average settler also, and longer than we did. Men do not usually arrive in a new country, and push through it without stopping, like one who had travelled in it many times. Parties of emigrants under guidance of a professional agent, may, no doubt, be brought up early, by leaving England in March or April, and coming *viâ* Halifax or New York ; but I am hardly treating of this class at all ; rather of the independent settler and better classes, be they professional farmers or young men about to begin life.

We left as early as would admit of the voyage being done in ten days—the utmost time allowable, to reach Winnipeg in fifteen. The steamers that preceded us, by reason of detention in the ice, were a much longer time. One was three weeks. The nearest free grants (of any value) are now fully two hundred miles or more from the capital. It is in the early season

of April and May that travelling is so difficult in this Province, the roads being, from breaking up of frost, melting of snow, and occasional rain, in a deplorable condition. Moreover, the settler must stay some days in Winnipeg to obtain the necessities for working and stocking his farm; and as it would probably be but a waste of seed and labour to sow later than 10th June, few farmers can reasonably hope to get anything from their land the first year—beyond perhaps a few potatoes and vegetables. Besides, old settlers affirm it to be a waste of seed to sow on the first breaking of the prairie sod. We have formed somewhat different opinions ourselves on this point; but at least it would be inexpedient for any settler to count on doing anything with it in his *first* year.

Again, from the same source, I read: 'Having availed himself of the liberal homestead law, and pre-empted an adjoining quarter section, he is now possessor of a farm of 320 acres; having brought out his family, procured his land, and started with sufficient stock and implements, at an outlay of less than a single year's rental of a wheat farm of the same size in his mother-country!' One will not question the comparatively small amount at which a man may acquire land in this country. But, after all, the above is but scene-painting, and little more. Unless he is possessed of great energy, consummate industry, indomitable perseverance, and *adequate capital*, it must be many years before the average tenant farmer of Canada possesses a farm in any respects the equal of a 320-acre wheat farm in England. The land acquired has to be entirely cleared, broken, fenced, and most probably drained. If he fancies he is going to get a return of sixty bushels to the acre, as is not unfrequently stated, he will find himself wofully deceived. If he averages twenty-five bushels, he may deem himself fortunate. Our farm lies in some of the best wheat-growing land in the Province. No one in this neighbourhood last season exceeded thirty bushels, and very few obtained more than half as much; and the possibility of grasshoppers and bad seasons has always to be considered.

No; statements like these—and they are but samples of most of such publications—mislead, and do no good to the country. I would say to an intending settler: Manitoba offers the following advantages—Land is cheap and good; land, moreover, as the country is unquestionably a rising one, must rapidly increase in value; and therefore, by acquiring it now, you are making a good investment. If you are industrious—But remember, *industry* is by no means a characteristic of this country—there is far too much *talk*—and the climate is unsuitable to its development. In summer the heat is enervating, and mosquitoes distracting. In winter the invigorating influence of the cold is neutralised by the quantity of clothes a man has to wear, incapacitating him for active exercise.

However, if industrious and sober—*This* too is of the first importance, for it is a sad country for drink; though, in the North-west no settler is allowed to be in possession of any fermented liquors under heavy penalties. A condition of things which, however excellent in the eyes of certain well-meaning folks, is a kind of paternal government most freemen would object to reside under. Malt liquor, if it could be obtained reasonably—as it can at the breweries of Winnipeg, though the bar-keepers will not so retail it, as it pays better to sell poisonous spirits—would do a man *real good*. The climate of Manitoba in winter demands something better than tea and water. These—drunk, too, in large quantities—I find insufficient for a man working all weathers out of doors. A more generous drink is sometimes beneficial, as the dryness of the air creates considerable thirst. The fact that no settlers stand the cold of the second and succeeding winters so well as they do the first, may be accounted for by low living, and perhaps through imbibing such quantities of valueless liquid. We drank porter in the winter with marked advantage. Both ale and porter of fair quality are brewed in Winnipeg at a price not exceeding 1s. 6d. per gallon. Brewing is an industry that, in every way, ought to be encouraged; but I hear of this ‘protection’ government refusing to allow breweries to be

established in the North-west ! Intending settlers can think of this, and take land accordingly.

Again, then, I would say—with industry, sobriety, and perseverance, a man may get on very well in this country ; a young man, unencumbered, and possessing the foregoing qualifications, with average health and strength, ought to do something more—he ought to save money. But, of course, when a man has a family, he becomes a fixture. The settler will have, at the outset, many hardships to contend with. First, if of cleanly and orderly habits, the dirt of the country will sorely afflict him. In the southern counties of Manitoba, where the black earth and greasy clay predominate, this certainly is a terrible trial, as, when the weather is wet, this adhesive mud is troublesome beyond description. The mosquitoes, too, and black flies are severe tormentors. The former usually last during June and July only, disappearing early in August ; but the flies remain much longer.

The winter is long, very long, six months at the very least, and puts a stop to almost all farm-work ; so that the farming months of the year are but six, oftentimes not over five ! How active a man must needs be to do a year's work in half of it ! Yet so he must. Were it otherwise, no doubt wonders might be wrought here with soil possessing in itself such fertile properties. The winters, as may be judged from our experience, are cold, but in-doors at least not at all unbearably so. The snow-fall is usually moderate, the average being a depth of two feet only—not more than essential for good sleighing. Getting about, therefore, during winter is fairly practicable even on foot ; but when it exceeds this, as in February with us, the inconvenience is very serious, putting a stop to all locomotion for a time, except with very great difficulty.

On the whole, I would consider it a country better adapted for young men of good education, and fond of a country life and pursuits, than for the average old-country tenant farmer, unless he be young, and unencumbered at least with children. The mode of life is so different ;

enterprise and fertility of resource being indispensable to any progress. In my view, three or four young men of suitable and congenial tastes and habits would best succeed by clubbing together, and mutually aiding one another until each is competent to manage for himself. It is next to hopeless for one man, in a country where efficient labour is so difficult to obtain, to farm even a homestead of 160 acres only *by himself*. I have known and heard of men, even after several years out here, making scarcely the least progress in this way, both their home and living being of the rudest, one might even say, most squalid character.

A young man coming out here should acquire some elementary knowledge of plain cooking; at least how to put his food, even if plain, decently on the table. At present, and for some years yet, it is strictly a pioneer life; but there are proprieties attaching to all circumstances, and there can be no reason why they should not be observed, especially by those who have been used to them. Nothing can be more demoralising to the character of a young man of education than a system of taking his meals anyhow; and it is to be feared this is too much the custom with young settlers from the old country out here. They soon fall into the 'too-much-trouble' ways of the country, than which there can scarcely be a greater hindrance to all hopes of success.

If two, three, or four clubbed together, the duties of the kitchen might be taken in weekly rotation, while the others were occupied with the general work of the farm. 'No success without order and system,' may be taken as an axiom of a very practical character.

As to married men, one feels at a loss to advise. There is no country where a man so much needs the help and society of a good wife as this; but the life of a farmer's wife in Manitoba is a hard one, and how few girls of education and refinement at home are in any way fit for it! In a country where domestic servants, as a rule, cannot be got, or, if got, are worse than none, the wife must be both *able* and willing to put her hand

to anything. There is no reason, except the senseless conventionalities of what is termed 'good society,' why young women of the best connections should not be educated *to be able* to discharge those domestic duties of life which they may, in the course of events, have at any time to perform. They would certainly be both happier and healthier for it, to say nothing of being more useful. It would be on any other ground a risk, if not a cruelty, for a man to bring out here, as a wife, any young girl otherwise trained; though instances occur where women very differently brought up have readily adapted themselves, and that most creditably, to the altered circumstances of their lives. Like the thorough-bred horse, a true lady or gentleman is the one who most readily adapts her or him self to any circumstances. But, of course, where no previous fitness has been acquired, the effort is the more severe. A paper lately published referred to this Province as assuredly the 'future cradle of an exceptionally fine race of men, and of beautiful women,' the children generally being so strong and well favoured; and I can myself endorse this testimony. It is a consideration, therefore, that may be given its value. The school system seems in process of development, so that education will probably be well provided for, though at present the great hindrance to it is the want of roads, rendering it almost impossible for children to attend school during certain periods of the year, if they reside far off. A community consisting, as some do—Rapid City, the Pembina District, Morris, &c.—almost exclusively of English settlers, of good education and connections, may in time develop not only a very agreeable kind of society, but a really happy future for settlers of this class. But it must never be forgotten that the conditions already referred to are, and must ever be, indispensable to all prospects of success out here.

The question of *capital* is rather an individual than an abstract one. One does not refer to capitalists; their interests are not embraced in any observations of this kind. But one man will make a shilling go further than another can half-a-



crown, and that by *good management*, and without any means.

As to young men generally, they cannot expect to do much *unless they have some means to start with*; as, apart from any other claims, they must, as a general rule, maintain themselves from their own resources for the first eighteen months. We certainly made quite £100 this our first year (1881); but though we possessed no exceptional advantages in regard of means ourselves—quite otherwise—we were conveniently situated, which gave us in Winnipeg a good market for hay and other produce, which could hardly be expected much further west. Therefore, it may reasonably be assumed that the average settler will make little to produce at least a *cash* return until he reaps his first harvest. With a garden he may grow potatoes and other roots and vegetables, not only for his own use, but for sale or barter. The wants of men in a pioneer life are neither extensive nor expensive. I know of men—sons of clergymen, officers of the army and navy, &c.—who live on little more than bread, potatoes, and tea, with occasionally a little bacon! But there is no reason for such a meagre fare; and it is wholly unnecessary with the commonest management and resource.

Horses (two) or oxen will have to be purchased for ploughing. We gave the preference to the former, as we understood them, and not oxen; and the former are pleasanter to manage, and more generally useful. But without this knowledge oxen are preferable, as horses are somewhat risky property up here, and expensive to keep—corn (oats or barley) feeding runs up; and working horses in this country require *much* of it. I would here suggest, as winter keep at least, that *barley*, bruised or boiled, is far more economical feeding than oats. The oats of the country weighing but thirty-two pounds to the bushel, we deemed to be of little value; and certainly our horses on severe work did well on the barley. It is more heating, has more nature in it, and is about the same in price. Indian corn cannot always be got—it is somewhat dearer than

oats or barley, but of course goes farther; we used it frequently mixed with them.

If horses are used for breaking the prairie, three will be required; therefore oxen here are decidedly preferable; but two or three settlers uniting together, as suggested, might combine both; for horses are indispensable for all other tilling but breaking, oxen being usually too slow.

Three or four young men with contiguous homesteads, might own a good tract of land—upwards of six hundred acres, without adding thereto by pre-emptions—and working together, would establish quite a profitable farm in the course of three or four years. Hence the advantage of *limited combination*. If each contributed £150, there would probably be ample capital; or indeed, under favourable circumstances, less still might be made to suffice. All depends on the individuals themselves.

## CHAPTER XIV.

Practical joking—Lateness of spring—Garden seeding—Hazardous journey—Break up of the river-ice—Resumption of navigation—Our season's cropping—Attractions of the month of May—Mud-fever in horses—Brisk immigration—Urban enterprise—Expected visit of the Viceroy.

THERE is an old custom in England, the origin of which it would be curious to know of endeavouring to make persons subjects for ridicule on 1st April. One would have thought a practice so puerile would have scarcely survived to become an institution in so remote and vigorous a clime as this. Yet, strange to say, it seems to flourish here with a comprehensive-ness undreamed of at home. In Winnipeg, on this date this year (1881), a public meeting was convened soliciting the attendance of citizens on a question of some local importance. Quite a numerous gathering was attracted "responsive to the invitation"; and when all were assembled, a curtain rose revealing the

words: 'You are all April fools!' of course to the intense disgust of the duped company. A pretty bold development, certainly, of this exotic absurdity!

Nature, too, in some measure seemed to sympathise in the custom; for whereas we had been anticipating spring, and were feeling that the long winter had at length taken its departure, the 1st April opened with the thermometer at 10° below zero, and with snow and cold, both on that and several succeeding days, which to one's feelings seemed as sharp as any experienced throughout the whole winter. In fact, this month, which is essentially a critical one for the Canadian farmer, continued cold and ungenial up to quite the middle of it; the snow scarcely disappearing at all, except in very sheltered spots, and the river remaining ice-bound; albeit, during the day, the water and slush on any frequented track were quite formidable.

About Easter, however, a very sensible change took place, the weather becoming quite oppressively hot, and the thermometer, even at sunrise, standing above the freezing-point. The effect was very marked. By the 21st, we were able to get in a number of garden seeds, as carrots, parsnips, beets, spinach, peas, &c. It was necessary, too, to use the utmost haste in getting up from town everything needed for at least a fortnight's use prior to the breaking up of the ice on the river—so long the great high-road in all our communications with the capital. As building operations were going on, we needed a considerable amount of timber and other materials, and on the 19th two teams were despatched to fetch them; but the roads were something indescribable. Ploughed fields in England were quite easy going in comparison; and it is to the credit of Canadian horse-flesh that for twelve miles they drew wagons, each containing over a ton load, through such difficulties, and with little apparent distress. Another journey had, however, yet to be made, and with much anxiety a team was sent off for a heavy load on the 21st. It recrossed the river in safety, much to my relief, about seven P.M. on the return-home. That

good cause for anxiety existed, was realised on the following day, when a single rider and horse, crossing at the same spot, broke through the ice, and were with the greatest difficulty saved from drowning; while our team and load, weighing altogether considerably over two tons, had safely crossed but a few hours before! Many serious accidents often occur at this time of the year from this cause; and on the Red River—only a few miles distant—a loaded wagon and horses broke through, and were entirely lost with a valuable load of goods.

On Sunday, the 24th, the ice began to come down from the upper reaches of the river, and to push its way onwards with great velocity, bringing wood, trees, and other things with it. This usually occupies about three days; by the expiration of which time many hundreds of miles of ice having been discharged into the Red River, the Assiniboine—so long the great highway for travellers—was once more flowing on, a dull and rapid stream of water.

On the 28th, the first steamer of the season bound for Port Ellice and the North-west passed our windows, ascending the river, and opening the navigation. With May the farmers' season begins in real earnest. Many were already seeding land fortunately ploughed during the fall. This is indispensable, and, in fact, not only fall ploughing but fall seeding, as in the United Kingdom, and even in Lower Canada—now unpractised with scarcely an exception—will have to be adopted. There can be little doubt it would succeed. Self-sown grain comes up vigorously enough in the spring quite unaffected by the severe winter frosts. We, by reason of our fire, and also from the excessive wetness of the autumn of last year, were unable to prepare any of our land, but we were now ready to set to work with energy; and three ploughs—two with horses, one with oxen—at once commenced operations. The land was very wet—terrible alike for horses and drivers; but time presses in the very short spring, for it is imperative that wheat be in before the middle of May, else it rarely matures. We had arranged our cropping as follows:

30 acres of wheat; 'White Fire' and 'White Russian' were used—seven pecks to the acre.

20 acres of oats—twelve pecks to the acre.

12 " barley— " " "

$\frac{1}{2}$  an acre of Scotch horse beans—the seed imported, and costing thirty-two shillings the bushel! This was quite an experiment—the seed being obtained with difficulty; but we desired to try everything practicable, and, for our horses, beans, if they can be successfully grown, promise the best results.

$\frac{1}{2}$  an acre of spring vetches (tares).

1 $\frac{1}{2}$  acres of potatoes—sixteen bushels to the acre.

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64 $\frac{1}{2}$  acres in all.

But, in addition thereto, quite another three acres will be given to mangels, swedes, and other turnips. Roots, as we have already stated, though valuable, are not much grown in the Province as yet, the winter storage involving such serious difficulties.

Sugar-corn (a sweet variety of maize, the ears much used as a vegetable), and the amber sugar-cane (a cultivation attracting considerable attention, and likely to become one of very general adoption in the Province for the manufacture of sugar, and especially of the syrups so much used in this country), will also be tried by us.

For a first year, we think this programme a pretty spirited one, and with a fair season it is hardly to be doubted it will yield a substantial return. But the difficulties to be surmounted in setting everything in motion—horses, implements, seed, &c., in the very short period available, have been something more than considerable.

This season (1881) so far promises well. The month of May seems to be the pleasantest one of the whole year; the rich verdure of vegetation, the bright exhilarating atmosphere, are very agreeable; while the violets under one's feet, the sweet fragrance of the cherry, plum, and other native fruit blossoms in the woods, have certainly made this month in Manitoba

quite a counterpart of an English May in its happiest season. Mosquitoes, too, although occasionally putting in an appearance, have been rarely troublesome; but had they been so, we have found, for indoors, a certain specific against them. The drug already referred to, and which we have now procured—the ‘*Pyrethrum roseum*’—answers perfectly. A little piled up on a tin plate readily ignites, and emits fumes that immediately kill or drive away these noxious pests. The worst is, that during this truly bright period, the amount of work to be done is so excessive, one has little opportunity to enjoy the beauties of nature.

Although May was a dry month, as regards rainfall—at its beginning, the result of the melting of so much snow, and breaking up of such intense frost, the mud and swamps were everywhere excessive; and our horses suffered a good deal from mud-fever. The symptoms were—considerable febrile derangement of the system, coupled with badly swelled legs, the hair coming clean off, and a scurfy eruption remaining. The only treatment seems to be to keep the legs well greased, and prevent the fever running downwards to the coronet, as it then becomes serious, affecting the foot, and sometimes causing the hoof to fall off. Time was too pressing to stop the horses in their work, and they gradually recovered. It is very desirable in this country, especially in the spring, to closely clip the legs of horses from all long hair. A clipping-machine is a very indispensable article out here with horses. Ours, unfortunately, in common with nearly all our stable requisites, was burnt in our unfortunate fire in the previous autumn.

A good flow of immigrants have arrived, and are arriving, this year, giving practical evidence that the hopes and expectations formed of Manitoba and the North-west are still lively and increasing. Nature this season (1881) is certainly doing much for this class. Last year it was incessantly wet. But still government seems apathetic as ever. Any improvement in roads is due to improved weather; little is done; scarcely even a bridge

repaired. At the present moment, at three miles from the capital, the following notice is posted on each side of a wooden bridge: 'Drive slowly; bridge dangerous.' The whole structure might be taken down and rebuilt by half-a-dozen active men in a single day's work! So much then for local parliaments, municipal government, reeves, and the numerous other elements associated in the administration of this over-governed, and yet wholly ungoverned, Province!

About a month since one of the longest and highest bridges on the road—perhaps a hundred feet long—came down with a crash while a wagon and horses were passing over—and this is a danger ever imminent to every traveller. Whether the advent of the 'syndicate,' composed as it so largely is of United States Americans, will infuse some life and energy into 'the powers that be' in these parts, remains to be seen. Increased experience has certainly not tended to alter the view I early formed of at least North-west Canadians—namely, that they are a people more for talk than action. It is true they are a young community, and lack the *means* to do all they would. Still, 'it is the will to do great deeds makes great deeds done.'

Of private enterprise within the city of Winnipeg there is no lack. The religious sects especially seem to be animated with wonderful enthusiasm. One body—the Methodist Episcopal—have discarded their old church, and are building one the spire of which is to be 250 feet high, or nearly double that of the Knox Church (130 feet), already referred to in these notes; while the Roman Catholic Cathedral, now building, aspires again to top this height. Parliament Houses and a governor's residence are also to be immediately taken in hand; while new banks, and innumerable other buildings, public and private—to say nothing of several new hotels of large dimensions—attest that the capital at anyrate is going ahead.

Much animation is given by the expected visit of the Governor-general\* and a numerous party in July next; and

\* This was, of course, written prior to the Governor-general's tour through the Provinces in the autumn of 1881.—Ed.

the authorities seem moved at last to 'mend their ways,' that is, the highways; and though appearances are often fallacious, yet during the 'year' I have now travelled the roads, it is the first sign of amendment I have seen, and I cordially hail it as a symptom of progress even in a *government* department.

All that will *now* be needed is fine weather. A single shower of rain at once takes, for the time, all the gilt off the Manitoban gingerbread. Its immediate effects are indeed deplorable.

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## CHAPTER XV.

The ornamental settler—Manitoban farming as it is—A life for whom suited—Local differences of soil, &c.—Sturgeon Creek Farm—1880 an exceptionally adverse season—The animating motive of our presence here—Summary of our experience.

WE arrived in this Province on the 5th day of June 1880, and it is now the same date of 1881, and our 'year's experience' is come to a close. That 'we have not been idle, we hope will be clear. We came out with the full intention of achieving success; and we have steadily kept this in view.

There is a class who come out here simply to live, and to take things easily. Such seem entirely out of place in a progressive country like this; if they do not go forward with the advancing tide, they must inevitably fall behind. One sees numbers of young, smartly dressed fellows, ornate with gold chains, rings, and solitaires, with finely starched linen—fresh arrivals from England—lounging about the streets of Winnipeg; and we wonder whether they have at all realised what farming in Manitoba means! It certainly means the greatest exertion to maintain even personal cleanliness and common decency of attire; for the destruction of clothes is truly alarming, and nothing but the adoption of the 'overall' duck suits of the country and high boots, can preserve a man who has to work from soon becoming, as to his clothing, a veritable scarecrow.



It may not unnaturally be asked, as a summary of our 'experience,' what the results are, as regards our own opinion of this country as a land for settlement. Speaking, then, for my wife and myself, *we* should indeed be very sorry were we compelled to live here always. It is a pioneer country—everything rough, and, by contrast with previous experience of other countries, terribly uncivilised. Our boys, however, for whose benefit we came out here for a while, like it extremely. It is a mode of life not unsuited to young persons fond of adventure and freedom, and who have not yet acquired, as second nature, those habits of order and propriety that are assuredly exotics in a country like this.

It may be urged, too, that our experience embraces but one portion of the Province and of the North-west, and that close to the capital. This is true. One could not be attending to active business at home, and running about the country at the same time. I lost no opportunity, however, of obtaining information from those who *had* fully explored it, and find, that, although the soil varies a little—the country losing much of the clay as one gets further west, and a lighter subsoil of sand is met with—yet the general features are pretty much the same, a black loam of surprising fertility. The land of the North-west abounds with swamps, and much of it is too low and wet ever to be capable of much cultivation. The sandy loam is of course much pleasanter to work and come in contact with than the clay; but it lacks that richness—fatness, one might say—that makes the soil of these parts so favourable for the cultivation of cereals; it being confidently predicted that when drainage has received due attention, this part of Manitoba will prove the most fertile portion of the whole North-west. And this especially applies to the southern side of the Assiniboine River, where we are located; as the soil is freer of alkali, which abounds to an injurious extent on the northern side. The further the settler locates from the capital, the higher the cost of most necessities of life, whether for consumption or building. In fact, in the Saskatchewan district,

flour is often as high as twenty dollars (£5) the bag of one hundred pounds weight—quite a famine price! For free grants the settler must now go at least two hundred miles west of the capital. But a man with resources at command can always purchase partially improved farms nearer Winnipeg, at prices that will prove practically cheaper than free grants themselves. I entertained this view before leaving England, and have steadily kept to it; with the result that a farm that has cost me but £500 (350 acres), is now valued at £1000, or an advance of £500—cent. per cent.—in real value within only a few months. This, however, is a consequence of being within easy distance of Winnipeg, where there is always a good and a rising market for all produce.

As a rule farms are small—that is, the area under actual cultivation; the average perhaps not exceeding, if it equals, fifty acres. But there are many farmers who have one hundred, two hundred, and three hundred acres under crop, though these are exceptional. One of the largest farmers around Winnipeg is Mr Hardy—a young Englishman—who has quite an ‘example’ farm at Sturgeon Creek, about seven miles west from town. His farm embraces several hundred acres with quite an extent of farm buildings, including a blacksmith’s shop, and, near by, a school, as he keeps a number of hands employed, and also many teams of horses. One sees on his farm more of the style of the best English and Scotch farms than elsewhere, and in the course of a few years it cannot be doubted the owner will have a very fine farm indeed.

It appears evident now that 1880 was a most unfavourable one for Manitoba every way; in fact, precisely such a year as 1879 was in the United Kingdom—deplorably wet, a ruinously bad harvest, and general depression. This season promises so far a great contrast; so that our experience has unquestionably been such as has shown us the country at its very worst. This was well. Still it will appear that, this disadvantage notwithstanding, our impressions are decidedly favourable towards it as a country for settlement; specially

well adapted for young and enterprising men beginning life, but certainly not what one would recommend for persons of either sex past middle age. We have ourselves met, no doubt, with more than average 'hard lines'—our fire to wit. We thought at the outset to make our trip to North-western America somewhat as a sort of picnic life on an extended scale. For the ladies at least it has certainly proved rather more than this. But I have been a soldier; and my wife is a soldier's wife, and, as such, has not been unacquainted with camp life. Our daughter also was born during my service in India. We were therefore not altogether novices in the mode of life we elected to pursue.

Under some circumstances it might well have proved heart-breaking drudgery; but our business has been to settle our sons—cruel pecuniary losses having prevented this being suitably done at home. To minister to their comfort, and give them a fair start on a life into which we are thankful they enter with every promise of success, has been therefore, arduous, though it has proved a labour of love to their mother and sister. Each of us has endeavoured bravely to put a shoulder to the wheel, and surmount obstacles; and if our experience may afford some incentive to effort and perseverance in others—especially in young men coming out here to begin life—these notes may not have been penned in vain.

For the encouragement of such, I may say that, *wholly unaided*, our three boys—the eldest under twenty—managed to plough and crop sixty acres in the short period of six weeks—the work, too, being *well done*!

There are some points still unREFERRED to. Before leaving England we were specially advised to take out much clothing—male and female—as this was both dear and difficult to obtain in the North-west. So far as Winnipeg is concerned, this is undoubtedly a grave mistake. Clothing of every description is not only abundant, but the prices certainly do not much, if at all, exceed English prices. In such establishments as the Hudson's Bay store and Stobart & Eden's, almost anything

obtainable in the best shops in England can be procured, and at moderate prices. Boots and shoes too, suitable for the country, are particularly reasonable—far cheaper, indeed, than in England, especially ladies' French-made boots and shoes. But of course with first-class home goods they can never compare.

The item of greatest expense out here is unquestionably that of *groceries*. These are certainly terribly dear. Our grocer's bills exceeded by double what they were in England, where we had two or three servants also to provide for. Groceries are necessarily for the most part importations from other countries, and are hence subject to the high duties of the Canadian fiscal policy (another drawback of their mischievous system of protection). These duties, added to freight, quite double original values. In time, no doubt, sugars will be produced largely in the province itself at, of course, cheaper rates. Ten years hence, the country will have altered in a surprising manner.

Although primarily a country for agricultural settlers, there is also a good opening for most handicrafts, foremost among which I would place the trade of a blacksmith. This class are always fully occupied, and at high wages, whether as working their own forges or as journeymen. An active and industrious man of this, or perhaps equally of any other handicraft trade, would be sure to do well. Market-gardening anywhere within ten or twelve miles of the capital is also a profitable occupation. Masons also earn surprising wages during the building season.

In short, as a summary of my own experience, having seen a good deal of other countries, distance from England being specially considered, I think it may be fairly asserted that this country offers at the present time to any enterprising young man a better prospect of success than any other country or colony that can be named. The winter climate of course demands sound and healthy subjects for settlers; but as the outcome of personal experience and observation, I unhesitatingly give my verdict—thoroughly independent and unbiased

as it is—to all seeking a land for the settlement either of themselves or their children, in favour of Manitoba and the North-west Provinces of British North America.

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## SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE.

MANITOBA, Sept. 15, 1881.

THE experience of a first year's residence of a settler in any country has always a tendency to be misleading. Still, a *second* summer, now past, has tended but little to vary the views formed after our first one. True, this season has been the very opposite of the previous one, which was more or less wet and inclement throughout. The past one has been a perfect drought—little or no rain for months, and a high temperature. The roads that were so direful last year have therefore been exceptionally good this year. Nevertheless, whenever heavy rains return, the same conditions must be liable to recur.

Grain crops sown early and *sufficiently thick*, are on the whole good; the seeds being exceptionally plump and hard, by reason of the perfect maturity attained during the hot dry season. Roots, on the other hand, have necessarily suffered from lack of moisture; but potatoes, if deficient in quantity, are of most admirable quality.

Our harvest is just now completed, and all the cereals safely ricked in fine order. Our boys, aided only by myself in *binding the sheaves*, have done the whole work by themselves—twenty-six acres of wheat, eighteen of oats, and five of barley, which have produced, of wheat, 650 bushels; of oats, 550; and of barley, 100 bushels. (We were unable to procure sufficient seed for this latter—crop being usually scarce in the spring.)

Unquestionably we have learned by experience that the shortness of the season here demands a much *thicker seeding* for

cereals than in England. Quite two and a half bushels of wheat, four bushels of oats, and three bushels of barley should be sown to the acre, where the broadcast seeder is used, to obtain a full return. Unless the ground is *fully covered*, weeds are so luxuriant they choke the plants. ♣

During the summer two railways have commenced work in earnest on lines running near ourselves, which are soon to be opened for traffic, and will greatly increase the value of our land.

Settlers are arriving in such numbers, that although three or four fresh hotels, affording at least a hundred beds each to visitors, have been opened this season, more are building, and it is constantly impossible for arrivals to get a bed. In fact, the prospects of the country are so good, that one feels the utmost confidence that the settlement of our sons here will be attended with the fullest success.



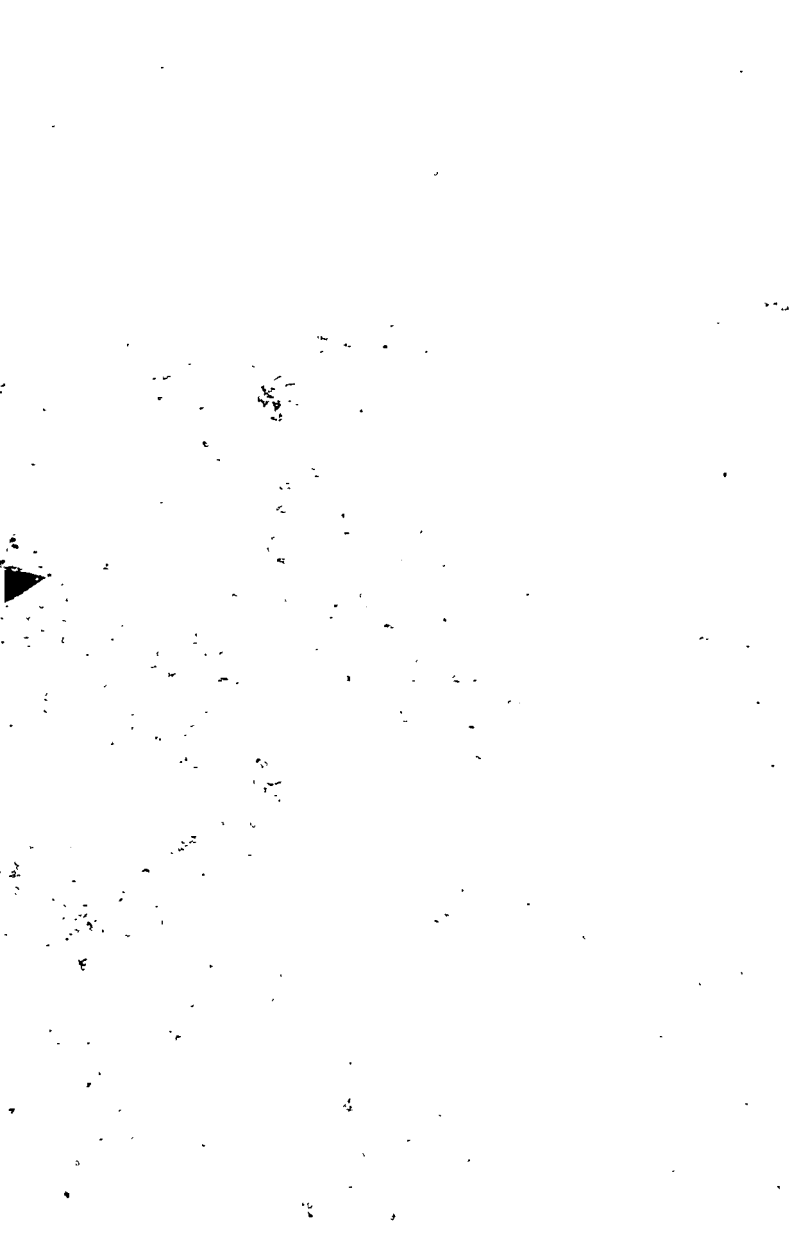
# THERMOMETRIC REGISTER OF TEMPERATURE AT SUNRISE.

FOR SIX WINTER MONTHS FROM 11TH NOVEMBER 1880  
TO 11TH MAY 1881.

## MANITOBA.

Day.	Nov.	Dec.	JAN.	FEB.	MARCH.	APRIL.	MAY.
1	...	-10	zero	-15	+15	-10	+42
2	...	-15	-10	+8	+14	+12	+30
3	...	-25	-12	+10	+12	+10	+40
4	...	-12	-15	+15	-13	-5	+48
5	...	-10	-20	+18	zero	-4	+40
6	...	-15	-20	+18	zero	zero	+45
7	...	-20	-25	+25	zero	+10	+45
8	...	-15	-35	+25	+15	+20	+50
9	...	-5	-36	zero	+5	+25	+45
10	...	+10	-40	+15	+15	+5	+50
11	zero	+15	-35	zero	+22	+10	+50
12	+10	+10	-25	+8	+2	+7	...
13	+5	+12	-35	-20	+8	+15	...
14	zero	zero	-35	-15	+12	+26	...
15	-12	-10	-40	-20	-2	+25	...
16	-10	zero	-10	-25	+15	+26	...
17	-6	+15	-10	-25	-20	+34	...
18	zero	+10	-2	-29	-22	+30	...
19	-5	+12	+18	zero	-15	+34	...
20	-10	+10	+10	zero	+3	+34	...
21	-12	+10	+2	-14	+4	+40	...
22	-25	-20	-3	-15	-7	+42	...
23	-10	-25	-12	-30	-15	+45	...
24	-5	-30	-3	+10	+25	+43	...
25	zero	-38	zero	+8	+2	+45	...
26	+20	-40	zero	+2	+5	+45	...
27	+10	-35	-15	-29	+20	+30	...
28	zero	-35	-20	-20	+10	+30	...
29	-20	-38	-15	...	+2	+28	...
30	-10	zero	-20	...	+10	+40	...
31	...	-2	-38	...	-2	...	...

NOTE. - signifies below zero; + above zero.







# PRACTICAL HINTS

TO

## INTENDING EMIGRANTS.

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THE author of *A Year in Manitoba* has presented a plain and unvarnished account of his experiences in settling his sons in Canada, and has given at the same time many valuable hints to those who may intend to follow his example. We purpose now to supplement these remarks by a few further practical hints to the intending emigrant, who is obliged to start, as hundreds must do, with comparatively small capital. To prevent disappointment and misconception, it is well to gain as complete and accurate an idea as possible of the Canadian North-west, and the best method of getting there. With this end in view we believe the accompanying information, gleaned from pamphlets issued by the Canadian Department of Agriculture, and from other sources, will prove interesting and valuable.

The prevailing agricultural depression of the last few years in the United Kingdom, has stimulated emigration to the United States and Canada. It is self-evident that, to those who possess a little capital, and who are not afraid of hard work, Manitoba and the North-west of Canada offer the very greatest advantages. A glance at the notes on the different routes may help the decision of the intending settler as to which one he shall select. One of the most helpful factors in the progress of the North-west will be the railway facilities furnished by the Canadian Pacific Railway, which, when completed, will develop the resources of these fertile territories. The present railway company are bound to have this vast system completed in ten years, probably about 1891; but at the present rate of progress it may be finished at an earlier date. When completed, the

distance overland from the Pacific to Montreal will be about 2960 miles, nearly 500 miles less than the route by the Union Pacific Railway and branches to New York. The total length of this network of railways, including branches, will not be less than 4000 miles. As will be seen from these notes, the section from Lake Superior to Winnipeg will be in use in 1882, while the section westward from Winnipeg had already traversed the whole of Manitoba in the autumn of 1881, and rapid progress is still being made in laying down this line. Some sections of it are already open for traffic, and branch lines are being formed wherever necessary.

The proposed railway route from Winnipeg to Churchill on Hudson's Bay (surveyed in 1880), thence by steamer to England, will be of great commercial importance if carried out. It will be shorter by 1291 miles than the Montreal route, and about 1700 miles shorter as compared with the New York route. There is this to be remembered, however, in connection with this proposed line, that Hudson's Bay is only open for navigation from about the middle of June till the end of October. It will also be seen from these notes that the intending settler has the option of securing land in various ways: by a free grant from the Dominion government, by purchase from the government, from the Hudson's Bay Company; or from private speculators, who, however, are as a rule to be avoided. Too much need not be made of the drawbacks to the new country; the long and severe winter, and the short hot summer, in which most of the agricultural work must be accomplished; the risk of prairie fires, the absence of good roads, the terrible thunder-storms, and the plague of mosquitoes and other troublesome insects. The good must be taken with the bad, and as a rule the former greatly preponderates.

More extended information about Canada may be had from the following works or articles: S. W. Silver & Co.'s *Handbook to Canada* (1881); W. F. Rae's *Newfoundland to Manitoba* (articles reprinted from the *Times*, with additions, 1881); E. H. Hall's *Lands of Plenty; British North America for Health, Sport, and Profit* (1879); J. J. Hargreaves's *Red River* (Montreal, 1871); *Jottings in Canada*, in the *Scotsman* (1881); *Recent Progress in Manitoba* (*Chambers's Journal*, No. 840, 1880); H. Stafford Northcote's article, *Canada's High-*

way to the Pacific, in the *Nineteenth Century* (Jan. 1882); Professor Bryce's *Manitoba: its Infancy, Growth, and Present Condition* (1882); *What Farmers Say of their Personal Experience in the Canadian North-west* (Ottawa, 1881); the *Reports of the Tenant Farmers' Delegates*, issued by the Canadian Department of Agriculture (1881); and the numerous letters of the correspondents who accompanied the Marquis of Lorne in his tour through the great North-west of Canada in 1881.

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EXTRACTS FROM THE 'COLONISATION CIRCULAR'  
RELATING TO CANADA.

*Issued by the Canadian Imperial Colonial Office.*

Manitoba, a province which has been made out of the North-west Territory, is situated between the parallels  $49^{\circ}-50^{\circ} 2'$  north latitude, and  $96^{\circ}-99^{\circ}$  west longitude, in the very heart of the continent of America. It is 135 miles long, and 105 miles wide, and contains in round numbers 14,000 square miles, or 9,000,000 acres of land.

Roughly speaking, the North-west Territories belonging to Canada cover about 2,500,000 square miles, and contain about 200,000,000 acres of fertile land, which are now waiting settlement.

Any male or female who is the head of a family, or any person who has attained the age of 18 years, can obtain a free grant of a quarter section of 160 acres; and can also make an entry for pre-emption rights to (prior right to purchase) the adjoining quarter section, at the government price, ranging from one dollar per acre upwards.

Lands can also be purchased along the line of the Canadian Pacific Railway at prices ranging from 4s. to £1 per acre, according to distance from the railway.

Intending settlers should go at once to the Land Office in the district where they intend to settle, and guides will be sent with them free of charge to point out vacant lands available for settlement.

The following is the minimum amount of capital considered necessary for a man with a family to start farming on a free grant of prairie land. It has been compiled from various works

that have been published on Manitoba and the North-west Territory, and may be accepted as fairly reliable.

Provisions for one year.....	\$200 =	£40
One yoke of oxen.....	130 =	26
One cow.....	30 =	6
One wagon.....	80 =	16
Breaking plough and harrow.....	30 =	6
Chains, shovels, spades, hooks, &c.....	20 =	4
Cooking stove and furniture.....	30 =	6
Seeds.....	20 =	4
Building contingencies, &c.....	60 =	12
<hr/>		
\$600 or £120		

It will be understood that the figures named above do not include the passage of the settler and his family from England to Manitoba and the North-west.


The cost of breaking up the prairie land is estimated at 3 dollars per acre, and the ploughing, sowing, harvesting, and thrashing, the second year, 4 dollars per acre.

Improved farms can be purchased from £1 per acre upwards.

There is not so much woodland in the prairie districts as in other parts of Canada, but there is enough for the purposes of fuel and fencing, and timber for building purposes can be purchased in the larger towns and settlements.

A line of railway, which is to connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, is now in course of construction by the Government of the Dominion, and is expected to cost from 75 to 80 millions of dollars. Several hundred miles of the line are now in operation. It is expected that in 1882 over seven hundred miles will be open, extending from Lake Superior through Manitoba, and westward through the Territories to near Fort Ellice, thus effecting a saving in the distance from Manitoba and the North-west Territory to the ports of shipment for Europe of some hundreds of miles, as compared with the existing route from the Western States of America *viâ* New York. This railway will pass through extensive coal-fields, which will insure an unlimited supply of fuel.

It may be mentioned that there are two routes by which an intending settler can reach Manitoba from Quebec, or any other Canadian port—namely, the ‘all rail route,’ *viâ* Detroit,



Chicago, and St Paul, to Winnipeg; or by what is called the Lake route, that is, by railway to Sarnia or Collingwood on Lake Huron, thence by steamer to Duluth on Lake Superior, and by rail from Duluth to Winnipeg. The journey by the former route is quicker by about a day, but the latter is more economical. By either of these routes the settler will be met by the agents of American land and railway companies, who will endeavour to persuade settlement in the United States as preferable to Canada; but the settler is advised to proceed direct to his intended destination, and decide upon his location after personal inspection. In 1882 a line of railway will be completed from Thunder Bay (Lake Superior) to Winnipeg and westward. It will pass entirely through Canadian territory, and its benefits both to new and old settlers will be very great. It may be added that most of the rivers and lakes in Manitoba and the North-west are navigable, and that steamers now ply during the season on the river Saskatchewan, between Winnipeg and Edmonton, a distance by water of about 1200 miles, with passengers and freight, calling at Prince Albert, Carlton, Battleford, and other places on the way. Steamers also run regularly between Winnipeg, St Vincent, and other places on the Red River. There is also steam communication on the river Assiniboine, between Fort Ellice and Winnipeg.

Manitoba is situated in the middle of the continent, nearly equidistant from the Pole and the Equator, and the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The climate gives conditions of decided heat in summer, and decided cold in winter. The snow goes away and ploughing begins in April, which is about the same time as in the older provinces of Canada and the Northern United States on the Atlantic seaboard, and the North-western States of Minnesota and Wisconsin. The crops are harvested in August. The long sunny days of summer bring vegetation of all sorts to rapid maturity. The days are warm and the nights cool.

Autumn begins about the 20th of September, and lasts till the end of November, when the regular frosts set in. The winter proper comprises the months of December, January, February, and March. Spring comes early in April. The summer months are part of May, June, July, August, and part of September. In winter the thermometer sinks to 30 and sometimes 40 degrees below zero; but this degree of cold in

the dry atmosphere of the North-west does not produce any unpleasant sensations. The weather is not felt to be colder than in the province of Quebec, nor so cold as milder winters in climates where the frost, or even a less degree of cold than frost, is accompanied with damp or wind. The testimony is universal on this point.

Snow does not fall on the prairies to an average greater depth than eighteen inches; and buffaloes and horses graze out of doors all winter. Horned cattle also graze out of doors part of the winter, but in some states of the weather they require to be brought in. Instances are, however, stated, in which horned cattle have grazed out all the winter.

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### INFORMATION FOR INTENDING SETTLERS IN CANADA.

*From a pamphlet issued by the Canadian Department of Agriculture (1881).*

SPRING is the best time to start for Canada.

When it has been decided to go, one of the Canadian steamship lines, whose advertisements can be found in the newspapers, should be written to, so as to secure a berth. There are vessels sailing from Liverpool, London, Bristol, Glasgow, Londonderry, and Cork. [The Allan Line is noted for the excellence and completeness of its arrangements.]

The fare from any of the places named to Quebec, the port of landing in Canada, depends upon the class of passage that is taken. The saloon fare ranges from £10 to £18; the intermediate is £8, 8s.; and the ordinary steerage passage is £6, 6s.; but agriculturists and domestic servants have the benefit of a lower rate, which can be ascertained from the steamship offices, or at any of the Government offices, who will also supply the necessary forms to be filled up: children under ten years are charged half-fare; and infants under one year a nominal sum. The fares include a plentiful supply of food, and good sleeping accommodation on board.

To Manitoba *through* tickets are issued by all the steamship companies. The fare from London or Liverpool to Winnipeg ranges from £9, 10s. assisted steerage, to £28

the saloon passage. Passengers are advised to take advantage of these tickets.

To secure a berth in the steamers it is necessary to send a deposit of £5 for a saloon passage; £1 for an intermediate or a steerage passage.

Twenty cubic feet of luggage are allowed to *each* saloon passenger, ten to *each* intermediate, and ten to *each* steerage. Settlers' effects, in use, will be passed free through the custom-house, and any necessary bonding arrangements will be made, which will thus prevent any delay, inconvenience, or loss occurring. Each passenger, before his departure from the port in Great Britain, should therefore be provided with address cards as follows:

*Mr.....*

*of.....England,*

*passenger to Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.*

*IN BOND.*

And he should see that one is pasted on each of his packages of luggage.

Any information or advice as to the most useful things to take to Canada, or upon any other subject, may be obtained at the offices of the steamship companies, or at any of the Canadian Government Offices.

Steerage passengers have to provide bedding, and certain utensils for use on board, which are enumerated in the bills of the steamship companies. They can be purchased at the port of embarkation, or hired for the voyage from some of the Lines—for a few shillings—leaving bed-covering only (a rug or blanket) to be provided by the passenger.

Government agents are stationed at the principal places in Canada, and they should be inquired for on arrival. They will furnish information as to free grant and other lands open for settlement in their respective provinces and districts, farms for sale, demand for labour, rates of wages, route of travel, dis-

tances, expenses of conveyance; receive and forward letters and remittances for settlers, and give any other information that may be required.

Persons with capital should not be in a hurry to invest their money. They can get good interest for it by depositing it in the banks, and can give themselves time to look around before settling. There is good banking accommodation in most of the towns, and letters of credit can be obtained from any of the English banks.

The classes which may be recommended to emigrate to Canada are as follows:

1. Tenant farmers, who have sufficient capital to enable them to settle on farms, may be advised to go with safety and with the certainty of doing well. The same remark will apply to any persons who, although not agriculturists, would be able to adapt themselves to agricultural pursuits, and who have sufficient means to enable them to take up farms.

2. Produce farmers and persons with capital, seeking investment.

3. Male and female farm labourers, female domestic servants, and country mechanics.

The classes warned against emigration are females above the grade of servants, clerks, shopmen, and persons having no particular trade or calling, and unaccustomed to manual labour. To this class Canada offers but little encouragement.

The following are the Government agencies in Great Britain and Ireland:

*London*.....Sir ALEXANDER T. GALT, G.C.M.G., &c., High Commissioner for the Dominion, 10 Victoria Chambers, London, S.W.

Mr J. COLMER, Private Secretary, same address.

*Liverpool*...Mr JOHN DYKE, 15 Water Street.

*Glasgow*....Mr THOMAS GRAHAME, 40 St Enoch Square.

*Belfast*.....Mr CHARLES FOY, 29 Victoria Place.

*Dublin*.....Mr THOMAS CONNOLLY, Northumberland House.

*Bristol*.....Mr J. W. DOWN, Bath Bridge.

Intending settlers should communicate with these officers if in want of any information or advice: and should arrange, if sailing from any of the above places, to call upon the Government Agent before their departure.



AGENTS OF THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT IN CANADA  
AND THE UNITED STATES:

- Ottawa*.....Mr W. J. WILLS, St Lawrence and Ottawa  
Railway Station, Ottawa, Ontario.  
*Toronto*.....Mr J. A. DONALDSON, Strachan Avenue, Toronto,  
Ontario.  
*Montreal*...Mr J. J. DALEY, Montreal, Province of Quebec.  
*Kingston*....Mr R. MACPHERSON, William Street, Kingston.  
*Hamilton*....Mr JOHN SMITH, Great Western Railway Station,  
Hamilton.  
*London*.....Mr A. G. SMYTHE, London, Ontario.  
*Halifax*.....Mr E. CLAY, Halifax, Nova Scotia.  
*St John*.....Mr S. GARDNER, St John, New Brunswick.  
*Quebec*.....Mr L. STARFORD, Point Lévi, Quebec.  
*Winnipeg*....Mr W. HESPELER, Winnipeg, Manitoba.  
*Dufferin*....Mr J. E. TÉTU, Dufferin, Manitoba.  
*Duluth*.....Mr W. C. B. GRAHAME, Duluth (Minn.).  
*St Paul*.....Mr G. R. KINGSMILL, St Paul (Minn.).

ASSISTED PASSAGES.

The terms for assisted passages from Glasgow to Quebec are supplied by Mr MOSES BUCHANAN, 62 Buchanan Street, Glasgow.

THE MARQUIS OF LORNE ON MANITOBA AND  
THE NORTH-WEST.

His Excellency the Marquis of Lorne, Governor-general of Canada, while in Edinburgh towards the end of 1881, gave the following summary of Canadian progress, with the prospects afforded by Manitoba and the North-west for the intending emigrant, as the result of his own experience after his tour through these fertile territories. We quote from the report as given in the *Scotsman*. 'We found Scotsmen who had gone out to Canada within the last sixty years prospering, from Nova Scotia to the Rocky Mountains, whether their fathers came with capital or without capital. In the case of Nova Scotia they came out without any capital at all very often. You can get a farm-stead and everything prepared there for about £300, and that within nine days of the Edinburgh Post Office. Any number of women will be

welcome there for service, and they will probably get about an offer of marriage every day. The further west they go, the more offers of marriage they will get. They want as many women as they can get in that country, and it is perfectly certain that they will all do well. I may state that the rates across the Atlantic are going to be cheapened, so that it will be quite as cheap during the season of 1882 to reach Canada as it will be to reach New York. That is a very important point—to make it as cheap to emigrate to Canada as it is to go to the United States. By the end of next summer (1882), emigrants from Great Britain and Ireland will be able to reach Winnipeg and 400 miles west of Winnipeg by Canadian rail and steamer. With regard to information issued under the authority and guarantee of the Dominion Government, letters should be addressed to the High Commissioner of Canada, Sir Alexander Galt, G.C.M.G., Victoria Street, London, W.

‘I came across a noteworthy instance of recent successful colonisation at Birtle, near Fort Ellice. Birtle is a very prosperous recent settlement, begun only two years ago, and now containing about 300 people. A man came up to the chief of the Governor-general’s staff, Colonel De Winton, saying the colonel would remember him. He turned out to be a man who had served as a gunner in a battery commanded by the colonel. He had risen to the rank of sergeant, and had left the Royal Artillery. He had gone to Canada with his three sons, and at that place had for himself and his sons taken up homestead lands. He was at the time of our visit, with his sons, in possession of 960 acres of some of the best land in the world, had an excellent crop last year, and was with perfect justice anticipating an increased return from all his lands in 1881.

‘Men intending to farm in Manitoba and all the North-west Territories should have from £100 as the minimum to £500 in their pockets on their arrival in Canada, for the purchase of agricultural implements, horses, cattle, and for initial expenses in the erection of a dwelling-house and steading. The settler should be out in Canada during the month of May, or before that time. Landing at Halifax or Quebec from one of the Allan steamers sailing from Liverpool or Glasgow, emigrants will find agents who will direct them upon their further journey. This journey will take them through a portion of the United

States, where they must be on their guard against the emigration agents, chiefly connected with the United States, who will do all they can to prevent them from settling in Canada. Should they have sufficient strength of mind to resist the seductions of these touts, they will find themselves, after 3½ days' railway travel, at the city of Winnipeg, where they will find land guides ready to show them land which they may, after consultation in the Government office, select for settlements. An easy mode of transit further west from Winnipeg is now afforded by the Canadian Pacific Railroad, which, at the end of last autumn, had been pushed to a distance of 30 miles beyond the river Assiniboine, thus traversing the whole extent of the Province of Manitoba.

'In July or August 1882, the emigrant will be carried from Quebec over Canadian lands to Collingwood in Ontario, where he will be shipped on most comfortable steamers, navigating Lake Superior to Prince Arthur's Landing. From this port, again, he will find railway-cars placed at his disposal to carry him through the woodland districts of Keewatin to Winnipeg. In that case, the only portion of the United States which he will cross will be a canal a mile and a half in length at Sault St<sup>e</sup> Marie. In two years' time even this transit across American soil will be avoided, for the railway will take the emigrant to the shores of Lake Superior at the Sault.

'My general impression is, that our people will be stronger there than they will be in the old country. It is a great deal better than loafing about the big towns here—living a healthful and useful life on your own free lands, and under the old flag. We never found one person who had made a fair experiment, and who had health and strength to make that experiment, in the new country, who for one moment regretted that he had gone there, and wished to come back to the Old World, except on a brief visit to the friends left behind.'

THE END.

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